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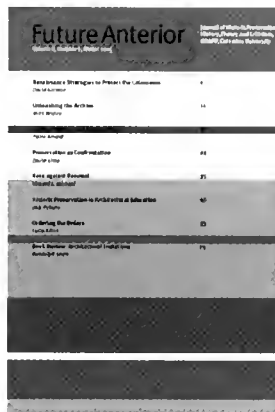
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Formalisms
thresholds 33

Contributors

Chant Avedissian was born and raised in Cairo. He attended art school in Montreal, Canada from 1970 to 1973. After a year hiatus in Cairo he left again for Paris in 1975 to continue his studies at the Ecole Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs (The School of Decorative Arts). Intending to study painting he turned to silk screening instead. He returned to Cairo at the age of 30 and began working first for the architect Abdallah Kouatly and then Hassan Fathy. In 1991, at the age of 40, he started a series of stencils. *Chant Avedissian: Cairo Stencils* was published by SAQI Books in 2006. He is currently preparing an exhibition in Cairo.

Yung Ho Chang, Professor of Architecture and Head of the Department of Architecture, came to MIT in September 2005 from Peking University where he was Head and Professor of the Graduate Center of Architecture. He received his MArch from the University of California at Berkeley and taught in the US for 11 years before returning to Beijing to establish China's first independent architecture firm, Atelier FCJZ. He has exhibited internationally as an architect as well as artist, including four times in the Venice Biennale, and is widely published, including the monographs *Yung Ho Chang/Atelier Feichang Jianzhu: A Chinese Practice*, and *Yung Ho Chang: Luce chiara, camera obscura*. He was the curator of the first Shenzhen Biennale of Urbanism\Architecture in 2005 and was invited to the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2006. His work has received a P/A citation in 1996, a UNESCO Promotion of the Arts award 2000, a Business Week/Architectural Record design award and an Academy Award from American Academy of Arts and Letters in 2006.

Alexander D'Hooghe is professor in Architectural Urbanism at MIT where he directs the 'platform for a permanent modernity'. D'Hooghe recently started a design office called 'ORG' with projects in the Low Countries. His books include *Public Form* (2005), and Volume no.9 (2006), a theme issue on the redevelopment of the American suburb. He is preparing the publication of his PhD, 'the Liberal Monument'. His work has been published in AA files, Archplus, Block, Perspecta, Places, New Geographies, etc. D'Hooghe worked with Rem Koolhaas, Marcel Smets and Wiel Arets. He holds degrees from Harvard and Leuven. He studied and taught at the Harvard Design School, the University of Leuven, and the Berlage Institute in Rotterdam.

Kaustuv DeBiswas is a PhD student in Computation at MIT. He holds a BArch from Jadavpur University in India. His dissertation focuses on the concept of multi-agency as a design exploration tool. Aplum, a dog whom he found in Appalachia, has been a source of inspiration for several projects.

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Peter Eisenman is an architect, and the Louis I. Kahn Visiting Professor of Architecture at Yale University. He is principal of Eisenman Architects in New York; the firm's

buildings include the in progress City of Culture of Galicia, in Santiago de Compostela, Spain; the University of Phoenix Stadium for the Arizona Cardinals in Glendale, Arizona; and the Aronoff Center for Design and Art at the University of Cincinnati. Eisenman's Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin both received National Honor Awards for Design from the American Institute of Architects.

Charlie Hailey is an architect and assistant professor teaching design and theory in the School of Architecture at the University of Florida where he received his PhD in 2003. He studied at the University of Texas (Austin) and Princeton University and has worked with the design-build group Jersey Devil in California and Florida.

Tad Hirsch is a researcher and PhD candidate in the Smart Cities Group at MIT's Media Lab, where his work focuses on the intersections between art, activism, and technology. He has worked with Intel's People and Practices Research Group, Motorola's Advanced Concepts Group and the Interactive Design Studio at Carnegie Mellon University, and has several years experience in the nonprofit sector. Tad is also a frequent collaborator with the Institute for Applied Autonomy. He publishes and lectures widely on a variety of topics concerning social aspects of technology and has received several prestigious commissions and awards. Tad holds degrees from Vassar College, Carnegie Mellon University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Institute for Applied Autonomy (IAA) is an anonymous collective of artists, engineers, and activists dedicated to individual and collective self-determination. Since its founding in 1998, the IAA has exhibited and lectured widely in the United States and Europe, including such venues as Ars Electronica (Linz), ZKM (Karlsruhe), Contemporary Art Center (Cincinnati), MassMoca (North Adams) and Eyebeam Atelier (NY). The IAA has also been the recipient of several awards and commissions, including Rhizome New Media Art fellowships in 2002 and 2006 and an award of distinction in interactive art at Prix Ars Electronica (2000).

Margaret Hwang is currently a candidate for a Masters in Architecture at MIT. Originally from Washington D.C., she holds a Bachelors of Arts in Visual Arts from Brown

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Mark Jarzombek is the director of the program in History, Theory, and Criticism of Architecture and Art at MIT's Department of Architecture. He has worked on a range of historical topics from the Renaissance to the modern period and his textbook entitled *Global History of Architecture*, co-authored with Vikram Prakash and Frances Ching, will be published soon.

Caroline Jones studies modern and contemporary art, with a particular focus on its technological modes of production, distribution, and reception. Professor of art history and director of the History, Theory, Criticism Program in the Department of Architecture at MIT, she has also worked as an essayist and curator, most recently with MIT's List Visual Art Center on Video Trajectories. She completed her PhD at Stanford University in 1992, before which she held positions at The Museum of Modern Art in New York (1977-83) and the Harvard University Art Museums (1983-85). Her exhibitions and/or films have been shown at MoMA and Harvard as well as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington DC, and the Hara Museum Tokyo, among other venues; her publications include *Sensorium* (as editor, 2006), *Eyesight Alone* (2005), *Machine in the Studio* (1996/98), the co-edited volume *Picturing Science, Producing Art* (1998), and other works. A frequent contributor to *Artforum*, Jones's current research into globalism informs her next book on contemporary art, the world picture, and what she calls "biennial culture."

Lydia Kallipoliti is a practicing architect currently enrolled in the PhD program at Princeton University. She holds a Diploma in Architecture from AUTH, Greece and a SMArchS from MIT. Her dissertation focuses on recycling material experiments at the intersection of cybernetic theories and the space program, and has been awarded the Lawrence Anderson Award and the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship. Her design work has received awards in international architectural competitions, and has been exhibited at the Royal Institute of British Architects, the Biennial Miami + Beach,

the Byzantine Museum of Athens, the Biennale of Young Greek architects, the 5th National Exhibition of Greek Architectural Work and the 'Non-Standard Praxis' digital design conference at MIT. Together with colleagues from Princeton University and headed by Beatriz Colomina, she designed and co-curated the exhibition "Clip/Stamp/Fold: The radical architecture of little magazines, 196x-197x."

Nana Last is an Assistant Professor at Rice University in the School of Architecture where she teaches graduate courses in Architecture Theory and Design. She received a PhD in History, Theory and Criticism of Art and Architecture from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1999. She also holds a Masters degree in Architecture from Harvard University. She has published work in journals including: *Any*, *Assemblage*, *Harvard Design Magazine*, *Space*, *Thresholds*, *Praxis* and *Art Journal*. Her work has also been included in a number of anthologies including *Theory in Contemporary Art since 1985*.

Adam Modesitt is a 2007 graduate of Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. He received a BA with honors from Wesleyan University, double majoring in Physics and Art History. He has worked with SHoP (2006) and the London Fosters Office (2004). He is currently working on independent projects and surfing.

Enrique Ramirez is a 2007 graduate of the Yale School of Architecture's Master of Environmental Design program. He is currently enrolled in the PhD Program in History and Theory of Architecture at Princeton University.

James Shen completed his MArch degree at MIT. He received his BS in Industrial Design at California State University Long Beach in 2001, and worked as a furniture designer for several years. He is currently working on his thesis titled "Repositioning Chinatown Las Vegas: An Architecture of the Banal."

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Emily White's recent projects include Vector Paradise, a proposal for a fibrous floating island; Strand Tower (with Testa and Weiser); and land formation planning and design for The World islands, Dubai. She teaches at the University of Southern California and Woodbury University.

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Introduction

Sadia Shirazi

There is as of yet no significant critical theory that guides the current production and critique of architectural form. Impelled by or resulting from this theoretical void, cultural institutions have sidelined architectural form in favor of complementary entities such as “the urban,” “the digital,” and “sustainability.” This does not mean that the dominant theoretical topics of an earlier age are now defunct. On the contrary, they linger around, underlying contemporary discourse, unacknowledged yet still determinant.

Treading on the toes of many disciplines, “formalism” continues to confound its allies and enemies alike. In literary theory, formalism is most closely associated with the Russian formalists, in art history with the theorist Clement Greenberg, and in architecture with Colin Rowe. Formalism is essentially a debate regarding the dichotomy between form and content. This most generic understanding of formalism is that artistic/architectural form may be understood autonomously, without reference to context (historical, cultural, social, political, material, etc.). To better understand the fragility of the term and its tendentious position, we can look to the feud between conceptual art and Greenberg’s formalism in the 1960’s. By combining and appropriating mediums and methods of other fields, conceptual artists dissolved the integrity of artistic method as field-specific, a distinction Greenberg had previously touted. Meaning was no longer implicit but became contextual. Others have argued that Green-

berg himself was a bad formalist, and had he been otherwise, the validity of formalist methods would have been less denigrated. The confusion regarding formalism’s character is based both on misuse and misappropriations as well as formalism’s own abuses, which lead one to question whether formalism was ever or is even now a stable, theoretical proposition. The tenets of formalism have reformed and rebanded to the point where one cannot locate a formalist epistemology within art and architecture. It can only be identified as multiple formalisms. Formalism has moved from a singular definition to a plural one, or perhaps the confusion over its definition has always been due to the fact that even Greenbergian formalism was in fact Formalisms.

The contributors to thresholds 33: **Formalisms** bring to light a series of debates within which formalism is embedded- challenging, celebrating, and denuding formalists and formalism as a stable entity itself.

History/Theory

Peter Eisenman draws Edward Said’s idea of Late Style into the realm of architecture. He writes that we now find ourselves in a unique period of lateness, a ‘modernist endgame,’ where architecture resists readings that privilege the optical. He argues that architecture need not continue grappling dialectically with the metaphysics of presence, and points instead towards emergent possibilities in which architecture offers new modes of

seeing. **Mark Jarzombek** revisits early Eisenman and rereads his 1976 essay “Notes on Conceptual Architecture,” revealing its implicit argument regarding architecture as a conceptual project. **Caroline Jones** revisits Greenberg’s Laocoön, postulating that formalism, for Clem, regulated the erotic of the male gaze, and that modernism was not only made by Clement but made Clem into Greenberg. **Charles Hailey** takes the structure of Susan Sontag’s seminal Notes on Camp as a basis for his own notation of the post-disaster camp and its exigencies. **Lydia Kallipoliti** revisits Venturi and Scott Brown’s seminal duck and decorated shed, demonstrating the authors’ literal formal fixation with Vegas’ strip architecture and their subsequent oversight of its electrical substructure. **Nana Last** looks at formalism pre and post-1960’s, demonstrating the way in which formalism’s epistemological basis has moved from exclusion to inclusion and examines the nuances within formalism, which is no longer simply accepted or rejected. **Olga Touloumi** tells a story in which the discovery of a fosezza in the late 19th century fuels the collaboration in Italy between criminal anthropology and prison architecture, in which one field tries cataloguing the visual patterns of the multiplying criminal body while the other produces a standardized cell built around one. **Enrique Gualberto Ramirez** attempts a formal reading of Erich Mendelsohn’s, Konrad Wachsmann’s, and Antonin Raymond’s designs for the Army and Standard Oil, who were hired by the Chemical Warfare Service, a branch of the US Army, to test the efficacy of napalm on architectural reproductions of Japanese and German housing in 1947. **Alexander D’Hooghe** pays homage to formalist debates regarding transparency, describing how conceptual abstraction was altered through distinct material deployment, and ultimately how the abstraction of flat glass ultimately affects public space and the private sphere.

Blending into Art, Architecture, and Urbanism, **Kaustuv DeBiswas** and **Sadia Shirazi**’s K9 Computation tells a story that shifts between a critical essay and a design project, ultimately presenting an authored meta-diagram that produces authorless and seemingly limitless essays.*

Art/Architecture/Urbanism

The interview with Egyptian artist **Chant Avedissian** deals with issues of autonomy, hegemony, and identity in art, and also takes on popular culture, International Tribunals, and the adobe brick. **Tad Hirsch** and the **Institute for Applied Autonomy**’s Terminal Air illustrates the practice of informal transfers of suspects to territories outside of the US for torture from the perspective of the extraordinary rendition travel agent; view plane models, flight routes, and private companies that charter flights to black sites. Fight Club is a transcript of the ideological brawl between **Yung Ho Chang**, a fabricist, and **Alexander D’Hooghe**, a monumentalist; **Sanford Kwinter** referees, keeping the two architects in check. “Guangming: New Radiant City” offers a critical attitude towards the modernist master plan, proposing a new town for 600,000 that, instead of delineating regions for leisure and work instead creates open parameters for the city, designing city blocks instead of defining programmatic occupation. **Jennifer Tran** and **James Shen**’s “China in London” imagines the future of the metropolis after the oil crisis, and conjures up a streetless city-scape in which the dualities of exterior and interior, public and private are collapsed. **J. MeeJin Yoon**’s “LOOP” investigates materiality and form through digital and material processes in a Voronoi based porous landscape for the P.S. 1 competition. The project looks responsibly at materials, structurally at form, and innovatively deals with production and materiality. Tackling issues of form and digitality, **Adam Modesitt**’s “Shingles” takes the vernacular typology of the shingle and frees it from its subservience to complex form in construction methodology, allowing it, instead, to become an increasingly grotesque generator of form itself. **Emily White**’s “Vector Paradise” locates the strength of the digital in its processing power - form is resultant, material is generative, and parameters are primary, positing a novel way of seeing architectural form today.

*K 9 Computation includes a media component. See <http://architecture.mit.edu/thresholds/issue-contents/contents33.htm>

Lateness: A Critique of the Metaphysics of Presence

Peter Eisenman

Colin Rowe used to say that one of the problems with architectural thought was that it saw itself in a state of perpetual crisis. Always focusing on the latest problem or issue, architecture was said to obey a crisis mentality, an attitude partly fueled by nostalgia for an impossible avant-garde and partly by the received notion that architecture was actually about solving problems. But as Rowe also would have said, permanent crisis is no crisis at all.

For many historians, crisis is part of an historical cycle. In his book *Krisis. Saggio sulla crisi del pensiero negativo da Nietzsche a Wittgenstein* (1976), the philosopher Massimo Cacciari suggests that a crucial change had taken place in the way modernity was perceived. This rupture, he argued, was a "crisis of foundations," which signaled the end of classical rationality and dialectics in philosophy. He suggested that a crisis of dialectical synthesis in fact underlay the history of the modern phase of contemporary development. Cacciari's crisis of dialectical synthesis opens architecture to the synthetic project. In another interpretation, Manfredo Tafuri saw the idea of crisis as productive. Tafuri considered history as a project of crisis, in that historical work, i.e. criticism, is intended to confront the boundaries, assumptions, and conventions of history. In other words, crisis as a project of history was of necessity oppositional.

Criticism and crisis are linked etymologically and, as Tafuri suggests in *The Sphere and Labyrinth*, it can be argued that the meaning of critical action is to call something into crisis. "Historical work calls into question the



problem of the limit; it projects the crisis of techniques already given." "The real problem is how to project a criticism capable of putting itself into crisis by putting into crisis the real." In his terms, the historical "project" is an open discursive construct. Rather than producing a linear narrative of history, the crisis provoked by criticism is one of redefining past events. In this sense, this work and the work of philosophical deconstruction in general would agree with Tafuri in that the aim of history is to use the present to modify our understanding of the past.

This crisis mentality is not exclusive to architecture. A similar mentality can be found in painting. As early as 1986, the ICA in Boston staged an exhibition titled "Endgame," which was a response to the supposed "bleak

situation in which the art object approaches commodity status." The term "endgame" is an obvious reference to both Samuel Beckett and Marcel Duchamp. Referring to Beckett, the curators said, "Here indeed was an endgame filled with desperate moves made in full consciousness of their futility." Endgames, they say, "are times for desperate measures, fighting against the odds in a struggle to survive." Again, in this construct, the endgame is oppositional. Neil Hertz's book, *The End of the Line* is not as apocalyptic about endgames and their strategies. He distinguishes crisis from endgames, which, as embodied in the moment that is never quite the end, become subtle and nuanced 'involutions' and 'exfoliations' that mark the moment before the end of the line. In the context of



the discussion here, that moment is called lateness.

This moment prior to the end of the line also has an analogy in literature in Thomas Pynchon's latest book, *Against the Day*. The story begins in 1893, a moment that heralded the technological changes of the coming twentieth century, such as the electric light and the elevated railway. This was to be symbolized in the Chicago World's Fair of the same year, which is the initial setting of the narrative. The fair was envisioned as a "Great White City," a future idyll, but in its architectural, if not technological, conservatism, it represented the dying gasp of a bygone era. Into this setting of the World's Fair, Pynchon introduces forms of fantasy space craft that could not have

existed at the time. These vehicles are manned by youths, teenagers who perhaps symbolize the possibility of freedom and movement. Thrust into this setting is a rotating cast of characters—balloonists, miners, anarchists, scientists and oligarchs—whose preoccupations with science, speculation, and even surveillance, mirror the elements of today's geopolitical conflicts. In Pynchon's book, storylines meander across the globe; multiple layers of reality accrue without resolution; and the novel seems to abruptly terminate at an arbitrary point.

In addition to engaging what can be called a late moment in American culture, Pynchon's novel exemplifies the concept of "lateness." *Against the Day* was criticized for its excessive length and its lack of resolve, but it is precisely these terms that characterize what Edward Said defines as late style. Pynchon's critics suggested that the author had produced a work that undermined the characteristics most strongly identified with his earlier work. In this sense, *Against the Day* is in fact a late book in Pynchon's career. If *V* is an early work and *Gravity's Rainbow*, which is a poignant account of the 1970s, represents a high style or middle period in his career, then *Against the Day* must be read in this context as a late work. But two points need to be made: first, this novel cannot be read in the same way as Pynchon's earlier novels, and second, this novel must be read as purposefully set in a late moment, in American history so that the story becomes a metonymy for the general idea of lateness as a potentially generative moment in culture.

Edward Said's discussion of late style, its characteristics and strategies, is helpful in defining a moment in time as "late," and describing "late style" as its characteristics and strategies. His *On Late Style*, published posthumously, is itself also a late work. In it, Said attempts to define lateness as having two subtly different but related aspects. First, lateness can be the manifestation of an opposition to—if not transgression of—the tendencies characteristic in an artist's own oeuvre or of a moment in time in general. For example, Said suggests that Beethoven's late works cannot be read in the same manner as other Beethoven work. The late works are oppositional in the rejection of a clear narrative of artistic canon into which the artist finds himself placed. But in another sense, on some deeper level, there is a dissonance and eccentricity

which is no longer oppositional or about communicating ideas but rather expresses an ambivalence toward communication itself. This is a second aspect of lateness which can be understood as non-oppositional, as an inwardly-oriented disciplinary critique. Such late work is not about information or communication; rather, one of its concerns is the impossibility of such previously known communication. Said suggests that a lack of communication may be one of the genres or tactics of this second aspect of lateness, but equally important, it questions the purpose of reading itself. Thus a necessary change in reading plays a role in lateness.

In forming his idea of lateness, Said draws on Theodor Adorno's discussion of *Spätstil* in Beethoven's late works. Adorno wrote "Late Style in Beethoven" in 1937. Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, written at the end of his career, was the composer's response to the seeming impossibility of innovation. Instead, Beethoven wrote a piece that was difficult, anarchic even, and could not be easily understood because it was outside of his characteristic style. Adorno thus describes late style as a moment in culture before a shift to a new paradigm, a moment that contains something we cannot understand at the time, but holds implications for the future. Said cites Adorno and Beethoven's late works as examples of the complexity, ambivalence, and undecidability that characterize a late style. Said described a late style as a new idiom in an artist's work, one that reflects the artist's maturity, "not as harmony and resolution but as intransigence, difficulty, and unresolved contradiction."

Lateness, then, has two overarching aspects. The first is a belatedness, which challenges or transgresses the status quo of its time. It integrates a historical convention outside of its place in time in the present. In Said's terms, "Late works quarrel with time." Neither a nostalgic nor clichéd use of the past, belatedness reflects a sense of being "out of time" and "outside of time," in other words, it is against any historicizing zeitgeist notion. Derrida's idea of *differance* unintentionally contains this aspect of lateness, as something different from and as a deferral of or late in regards to its own historical periodization. The second aspect of lateness, that which involves an inwardly directed critique, does not present an overt challenge to its time. It is this non-oppositional aspect of

lateness which will be seen to be critical in the context of the argument below.

While Said sees these two aspects of lateness as part of the same late style, it is their differences which point to an important distinction for architecture. In architecture, this non-oppositional aspect of lateness can be distinguished from a period of transgression. If one considers the architecture of the Italian Renaissance in these terms, Brunelleschi and Alberti would be positioned within an early period as a fifteenth-century avant-garde, in which they proposed a completely new idea of a relationship between a subject and object based on both perspective and history. A second period of the High Renaissance would include Bramante's establishment of the autonomy of the organism as a totalizing system in which, following Alberti's dictum, the parts relate to the whole—a concept that remains in place today. The third, or Mannerist, period is the revolt against the orthodoxy of the High Renaissance, apparent in the work of Serlio, Giulio Romano and Palladio. But then there is a fourth period, a lateness which is neither Mannerism nor proto-Baroque. It can be discerned in the work of architects such as Scamozzi and Sansovino, before the radical changes manifest in the Baroque. Both of these architects adopt a more covert language of transgression of architectural conventions.

Tafari addresses this other idea of covert transgression in his last book, *Interpreting the Renaissance*. He cites the literary idea of *sprezzatura*, or a calculated carelessness, to describe an historical shift in reading. *Sprezzatura* depends on the subtle misuse of codes. It is a way of seeming unconcerned that is in reality very concerned. *Sprezzatura* is a maximum of naturalness with a maximum of artifice. *Sprezzatura* implies a context of norms that are known and from which certain rules are broken, not in an obvious way, but in a laconic, almost accidental or hardly noticeable way, as if the break were an oversight or a mistake. Tafari sees *sprezzatura* as a dialogue between following, ignoring, and breaking the rules. For breaking the rules requires even greater attention to those rules, for rules must be well known in order to be so subtly broken that the break is not realized at first glance. If breaking the rules is revealed overtly, it may seem vulgar, or the reverse: the obviousness of

the break affirms the prior period through its dialectical opposition. In this sense, sprezzatura reflects the ability to register both a subtle break and the ability to distinguish between overt and an almost indistinguishable subversion of rules, which is ultimately non-dialectical.

During the late sixteenth century, the idea of *sprezzatura* reflected two forms of lateness: oppositional versus non-oppositional, external versus internal. *Sprezzatura* was deployed to subtly register those conflicts as critical. Tafuri introduced the concept of *sprezzatura* in his book to demonstrate that the Renaissance did not subscribe to the kind of universal idealism later portrayed by Hegel with regard to the dialectical relationship between truth and beauty. Tafuri's argument questions the relationship of truth and goodness to beauty, to perfect ideal form. It is in this context that Tafuri uses the work of Jacopo Sansovino, a Roman architect practicing in Venice, as an example of the modest, vernacular, timeless, and silent in architecture.

If there is a late non-oppositional period following both the High Renaissance and Mannerism, it also follows that such conditions could possibly exist today if the historic sequence of the modern period is examined. Beginning with the epistemic shift of 1789 to the paradigmatic shifts of 1914, 1968, and, arguably, of 2001, architecture today faces what has been called lateness, or a modernist endgame, one that exists before any evidence of a paradigm shift. Throughout history, despite differences in style, architecture that is assumed to be critical has always had the capacity to be closely read, each style having its own necessities of reading—this is especially true for work that might be considered “late.”

Lateness provokes crisis of what is written but also, and as important, a crisis of reading. The differences in the possibilities of reading lateness can be further explored by comparing the transgressive and internal moments of lateness in the work of two filmmakers, Robert Bresson and Michael Haneke. In the early 1960s, Bresson's work presented a different use of the image in relationship to narrative to transgress the filmic norms of high-modern Hollywood. A film of Bresson was transgressive in its time in clearly attacking Hollywood's cinematic conventions, yet today would appear terribly slow moving and

relatively empty of action. It might even be difficult to sit through the film because today's media environment has created a different context for the art of film. This is most evident in his film *Pickpocket*, in which two narrative incidents are emblematic. The first incident involves a closing door. Films usually cut away quickly to the next scene, rather than wait and watch until the door is fully closed, to refrain from interrupting the pace of action. In *Pickpocket*, not only does the camera watch the door close, but it also remains fixed on the closed door for four or five seconds, creating a pause, a change of pace. This gap in the audience's expectation counters the audience's passivity and requires them to engage in the film and to understand those pauses, their slowness, silence, and nuance.

Another example is the absence of narrative action: the pickpocket goes to the racetrack for the first time, ostensibly to practice becoming a pickpocket. The audience is set up, expectant, locked in suspense as to what will happen. The pickpocket is seen entering the racetrack, mingling a bit with the spectators, and then suddenly he is seated in the back of a police car. The important action of the attempted crime, his discovery, the assumed chase, and his apprehension is not shown. In involving the audience in seeing, yet countering their expectations of a conventional cinematic experience, Bresson sets up cinematic mechanisms that frustrate the audience yet provoke them to participate in working through such gaps in the narrative. Bresson's *Pickpocket* is distinctly anti-spectacular, arguably even an anti-cinematic experience. It requires participation from its audience in that the film withholds images of action and thus refrains from producing the equivalent of literal, graphic, and spectacular imagery. All of this requires a change in reading for the film to be understood.

The filmmaker Michael Haneke could be considered today's analogue to Bresson. While Haneke provides several examples of a less aggressive critique of existing filmic narrative, he is more concerned with a questioning of the internal structure of visual images that provokes in its viewers a new form of reading. Haneke's film *Caché* (*Hidden*) initially appears to take the form of a classic mystery—an archetypal modernist genre—with all of the requisite ingredients: surveillance, anonymous packages,

a violent death caught on video tape, and a set up involving a film within a film—a couple is being filmed, yet there is someone filming this filming. The film's premises suggest to the viewer that the identity of the voyeur will be resolved by the end of the film. But the film never answers this question; the viewer has searched for clues, only to find that, by the end of the film, the "who dun it?" cannot be solved. The purpose of the film was not to find a solution through a close reading. Watching the film without the goal to solve the mystery produces an entirely different reading of the film. A second viewing of *Caché* draws attention to the formal language of the cameras: the filmmaker's pan versus the stillness of the voyeur's surveillance camera. Once one realizes that the film is not about the reading of codes and indices, then the viewer's way to read has to shift in this context: close reading is not useful. Rather than a narrative in which "truth"—the identity of the voyeur—is revealed, the film produces undecidability and remains unresolved. It is not about what happened but about the language of reading. While Bresson may be about close reading, Haneke is not.

Another of Haneke's films, *Code Unknown* challenges the idea of close reading by providing a set of clues or codes whose meaning is never revealed. The code remains unknown because the film is not asking the audience to solve it. The difference between Bresson and Haneke, both highly imaginative and creative filmmakers, is instructive for today. If Haneke's films suggest that there no longer an interest in close reading, is it possible that today's late moment suggests another mode of reading? In other words, does the mode of reading provoked by films such as *Caché* and *Code Unknown*—a reading that is not looking for clues, indices, or narrative, or any other aspect of the part-to-whole relationship—suggest another mode of reading architecture? Unlike previous manifestations of lateness—say late modernism—this particular moment in history is different.

This difference relates to the impact of the events of 1968, particularly the philosophic revolution known as deconstruction or poststructuralism, which occurred at that time. Among other issues that deconstruction questioned was the subtle but continuing influence of the metaphysical project, particularly the metaphysics of presence. Deconstruction aimed at the Hegelian dialectic

and the synthetic project of philosophy. Yet while philosophy could deconstruct presence, since it was only conceptual, Jacques Derrida claimed that in architecture, this was more problematic since architecture was concerned with actual presence. Architecture for many thinkers including Derrida was considered the locus of the metaphysics of presence. This was an axiom believed by both phenomenologists and conceptualists, two agencies of architects for whom the metaphysical project was up to that time not an issue. Architecture could not have conceived itself as the locus of the metaphysics of presence until poststructuralism and until philosophers such as Derrida raised the topic. Thus, today there is an awareness of architecture's implication in the metaphysical project, the persistencies of the part-to-whole relationship, the hegemony of vision, and the dialectical conditions of form/function, figure/ground, and subject/object.

It is important to note that the metaphysical project was responsible for bringing about the modern era in architecture, first, in the shift in the fifteenth century from a transcendental to an immanent metaphysic. Despite changing styles, from Renaissance to Baroque to Neo Classicism and despite paradigm shifts, the metaphysical project remained intact. This is partly due to the manner in which in these stylistic and paradigmatic shifts were located as an oppositional dialectic. The metaphysical project in each case was the engine of change.

Concerns that are central to architecture—material, tectonics, and dwelling—are rooted in the idea of place,



and of a truth in presence. If architecture's function is to place by providing not only a representation of presence, but a presence itself, then its major transgressive act is to displace place. In philosophy, a strategy of displacement is not physical or literal, but in architecture displacement cannot help but to engage physical material and site. But looking back on these changes in architecture, what strikes one is that they are by-and-large oppositional.

Architecture in this sense is a unique discipline, that in order to exist as such, it must undo or displace what it must place. No other discipline can make that specific claim. If transgression in architectural terms means displacing what needs to be placed, then this transgression is oppositional to prior architectural conventions, and therefore continues to operate dialectically. This was always the case in architecture, whether it was the displacement from a Renaissance façade to a Baroque façade, or the displacement of the ground floor with *pilotis* in the Modern Movement. In each of architectural history's prior moments of lateness, the metaphysics of presence returns as a concern of architecture: for example, despite Piranesi's dismantling of the part-to-whole relationship in his Campo Marzio, the figure of the whole returns strongly in the relationship of building to city in Le Corbusier, Kahn and Rowe. Acts of overcoming, displacing or transgressing the ideas of presence, place, being-in-place, and function all continue in a cycle of transgression, maintaining architecture within the metaphysical project. Moreover, all of the moments, from the moment of the avant-garde to the moment of the late-

ness, have in one way or another been characterized by these oppositional tendencies.

Despite the prevalent discourses of crisis in architecture, it is argued here that today presents a condition not of crisis but of lateness. Lateness in this sense is neither dialectical, nor oppositional, nor crisis-provoking in relationship to what has preceded it or what may come after it. Lateness is clearly not a project of the new. It is a moment of time that is conducive to strategies that are not oppositional. In this condition that is neither a new paradigm nor an opposition to an old paradigm, lateness provides a unique opportunity to examine the interiority of the architectural discipline and one of its major unthought conditions which is its metaphysics of presence. Today's period of lateness is the first to recognize that the metaphysical project is no longer necessarily a condition of certainty. This non-transgressive aspect of lateness does not need to engage or transgress the metaphysical project, that is, to repeat the cycles of history. If lateness offers a moment when the metaphysics of presence is not a central concern, this moment is one in which a possible strategy may emerge outside of the dialectical project.



A Conceptual Introduction to Architecture

Mark Jarzombek

In 1978, Peter Eisenman wrote an intriguing article [Fig.1]. What we see on the page is only a few meager footnote indications dotting the white surface of the sheet; the text of the footnotes at the bottom of the page is all that there is to read. It is certainly one of the more clever texts Eisenman has written. My purpose in discussing this text is, however, not to focus on Eisenman and what he intended with this text, but to see this text as a riddle that I will try to unravel in order to make a few points about the status of architecture in general.

Most of us see footnotes as something imposed on students by school-masterly professors. But footnotes did not appear out of nowhere. They have a very specific history dating back to the second half of the nineteenth century and to the efforts of the positivist philosopher, Leopold von Ranke. He argued that History, to be differentiated from fiction, had to be built on a foundation of verifiable information. The footnote was the place where the authenticity of the historian's claim could be substantiated, with the archive serving not as just an arbitrary heap of books, but as the physical structure on which our understanding of civilization rests. The argument, in keeping with the professionalization of knowledge that typified the second half of the nineteenth century, was to become the mainstay of modern historical methodology.

I would like to emphasize the word modern, for footnotes make a very specific claim about modern textuality that is broader than the question of the empirical; footnotes

are also the place that register intellectual debate. Now, as obvious as this sounds today, one has to remember that Ranke was answering criticisms that were leveled against George Friedrich Hegel and the numerous post-Hegelian dialecticians of the middle nineteenth century who elevated philosophically-informed history over disciplinary complexity. This was because in emphasizing the living drama of history, Hegel downplayed the relevance of historiography, namely the study of what historians have to say about each other's work. As he explained, historiography, under the pretext of "higher criticism," – and here he notes that French were particularly at fault in this – has introduced "all the antihistorical monstrosities that a vain imagination could suggest." Historiography, in the Hegelian sense, can only survive if it becomes an activity of Reason advancing the cause of the dialectic. Stated somewhat simply, History, with a capital H, has to concern itself with the 'real' history and not with the various things that other historians say.

With Ranke, disciplinarity was given a sense of autonomy, the processes of thinking were, in that sense, redeemed to history and, so he hoped, to philosophy. But this modernity was not fully accepted by philosophers and, in fact, was challenged by twentieth century philosophers, with long-lasting – and for me negative – consequences especially after Friedrich Nietzsche, in a critique of Immanuel Kant, accused the most renowned

NOTES ON CONCEPTUAL ARCHITECTURE:

Towards a Definition

Peter D. Eisenman

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1 For an example of the use of the term 'architecture or environment' as an over-simplified metaphor, see Benedikt, Michael, "Sculpture as Architecture," New York Letter, 1966-67, ed. by Battcock, Gregory, *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, E. P. Dutton and Co., Inc., New York, 1968.

2 For an example of such a text, see Panofsky, Erwin, *Idea, A Concept In Art Theory*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, S.C., 1968.

3 For example, it is debatable in terms of a conceptual art whether there has been much change in the last fifty years. If one were to, say, compare the work of Mondrian with say, a Sol Lewitt.

4 See Kishan, Donald, "The Seventies: Post-Object Art," insert in catalogue, *Conceptual Art and Conceptual Aspects*, Kishan, Donald, The New York Cultural Center, New York, 1970.

5 Lippard, Lucy R. and Chandler, John, "Thus the difficulty of abstract conceptual art lies not in the idea but in finding the means of expressing that idea so that it is immediately apparent to the spectator," can be considered similar in intention. "The Dematerialization of Art," *Art International*, Volume XII, No. 2, February, 1968.

EISENMAN 1

Fig. 1. Opening page of Eisenman's article

philosopher as not being "a genuine human being."

A scholar can never become a philosopher. Even Kant could not manage it and despite the innate power of his genius remained to the very end in chrysalis state. Those who think these words unfair to Kant do not know what a philosopher is — not only a great thinker but a genuine human being. And when has a scholar ever turned out to be a genuine human being?

The reason this critique of the scholar is important to my discussion is because if there is any literary form that is associated with scholarly and historiography discussions, it is the footnote, which soon came to be seen as a form of alienated intellectual production. As a result, the footnote, at least in philosophy, all but disappeared. We can see the shift in attitude in the writings of John Dewey. In his early books, from 1880s, there are a wealth of footnotes with cross-references, further readings, and explanatory asides. By the 1910s, the footnotes become fewer, and in the 1920s, they disappear completely. For Dewey, in this later phase, acknowledging the presence of his sources constituted an interruption in the flow of reasoning.

By the 1950s, these tensions had translated themselves into a question about the production of knowledge in the universities. Generally speaking, from the perspective of the arts, it was the Deweyian, anti-scholarly pedagogy that took root in most colleges and universities in the US. In thousands of classes it was emphasized how scholarship is antithetical to the making and understanding of art. Rudolf Arnheim, read by many young architects in the 1950s and 1960s, for example, wrote this in his book *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* (1954).

Art may seem to be in danger of being drowned by talk.... We are overwhelmed by a flood of books, articles, dissertations, speeches, lectures, guides—all ready to tell us what is art and what is not.... Our eyes have been reduced to instruments ... The inborn capacity to understand through the eyes has been put to sleep and must be reawakened.

So when we dig beneath these footnotes – for we have to first understand what it is that we are reading here – what

we find is a broader debate about where to locate intellection in the arts. The Eisenman text, at first glance at least, conceptualizes what Arnheim – and later Arthur Danto and others – would consider the dangers of too much intellectual talk, especially by non-philosophers. In that sense, the text – if I may extrapolate – opposes the American, bourgeois ethos of a presumably liberated, "creative" ego. It confronts head on (or perhaps one should say 'feet first') the anti-intellectual ideology of American post-WII humanism that is still pernicious in academe and in museum culture to this day.

We must remember, however, that what we have here is not just the footnotes as presence – the presence of the aesthetics of talk – , but the presence of a non-text. Clearly, we are supposed to read our way into a trap. What is retrieved in Eisenman's footnote is not some schoolish commitment to knowledge and erudition, but the opening gambit into the torturous interplay between modernity and Self. Eisenman's footnotes, in other words, are indicative of the split of the modernist subject torn between the demands for contextualism and liberation, and between explaining yourself in words and explaining yourself through your work. The footnotes thus bring us face to face with the crisis – and the artifice – of modernist self-positioning at a moment of radical de-articulation. This "contingent signifier," as Jacques Derrida might call it, is a withdrawal toward textuality, a withdrawal that makes architecture possible.

But what kind of architecture is this? The text is not just a fascinating play on the artifices of discourse. It is clearly an architectural plan, the footnote markers indicating points in an indexical space, constructed from one to fifteen. The work that is revealed, in other words, is not just an act of writing but the first act of making architecture. The article that we see and yet do not see – the building that we see and yet do not see – this conceptual article – for the title is indeed "Notes on Conceptual Architecture –", is both a form of cultural commentary on the excess and travails of intellectual effort in the production of architectural discourse and the first indications of an architectural design – the building that emerges out of the talk; that hovers over the page. And, if one can see the page as an architectural drawing, it is also possible to imagine the situation in reverse, to imagine the architect mistaking – so to speak – his plan for a text, in a

are retrieved primarily for their form, so as to clarify semantic and syntactic issues as well as to articulate the difference between the semantic and conceptual form.

In other words, the conceptual, for Eisenman, is not that which is placed in space as an abstract counterargument to that which is not abstract, but that which is retrieved from space it self, and this, Eisenman argues, makes his definition much different from that of the so-called "conceptual artist." Space, for Eisenman, has to be erased, if you will, to get to the conceptual residues in the charged interface between meaning and form. Space is not just emptiness in which the conceptual can then be placed.

What Eisenman is trying to play out here is a high-stakes game that wants to move the "conceptual" as close as possible to the minimal, but to remain within the liminal boundary of architecture. He thus also levels a protest against the artists, whose idea of the conceptual operates on the ground of an architectural and philosophical naivety about the nature of space. Just because an object is abstract or associated with a long list of intentionalities does not mean, for Eisenman, that it is conceptual. To be conceptual, it has to interrogate the fundamental not of space, but of the matrix of intellectual conversation. This position takes the reader to the bottom of the last page, to Footnote 15, the last footnote when it becomes clear that Eisenman is responding to a book called *Conceptual and Conceptual Aspects*. His piece *Notes on Conceptual Architecture* (where he erased from the title the word *foot*) is a conceptual piece in response to *Conceptual and Conceptual Aspects*. And to make his point, he leads us to a footnote in that book [Fig. 2].

15. See footnote 11, p. 8. Karshan, Donald, Conceptual and Conceptual Aspects, The New York Cultural Center, New York, 1970. But further, the problem remains, as to what role these formal syntactic considerations must play if there is to be a conceptual aspect to an architecture in its realized form.

That just about says it all.

Now I could add a few more thoughts about the status of Conceptualism in the 1970s, but this paper

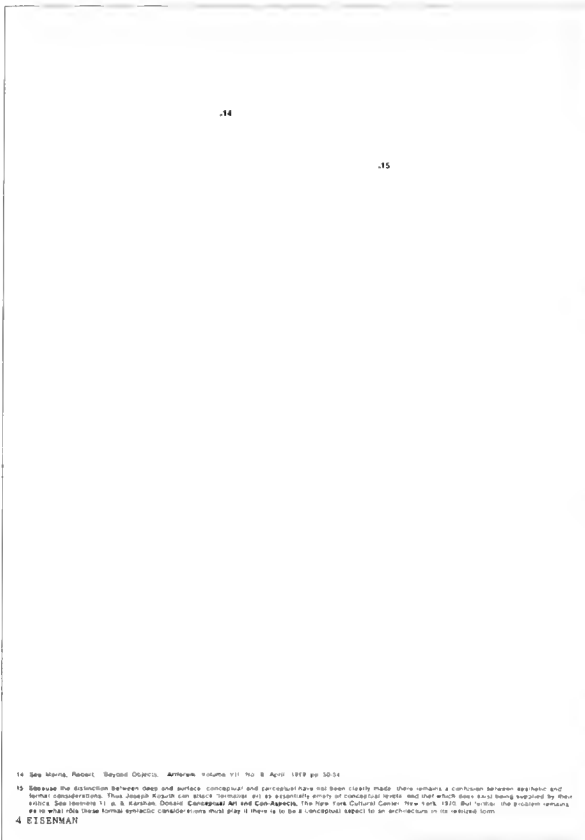


Fig. 2. Last page of Eisenman's article

paratactic jump from designing to writing, that exposes the contiguous yet stressful relationship between architecture and thought.

The article is a 'conceptual piece' about the (un)grounding of architecture in the context of the discussion about architecture made possible by means of a double act of writing and erasing and the double act of making a text that is a not-text and an architecture that is a not-architecture.

Now, the text, of course, itself makes a very particular argument about Conceptualism, the art movement. Footnote 10 reads:

The intention here is to limit the discussion and to focus on the distinction between images which are retrieved primarily for their meaning and those which

is not about the 1970s and the debates at that time. I am using Eisenman's text to discuss a broader question about architecture as an intellectual – and conceptual – project. So, back to Hegel, for it is in his work – but reading contrary to his purpose – that I see the articulation of the architectural problematic that I am trying to raise and that ghosts its way across the surface of Eisenman's text. Hegel elevated architecture above the empirical and above the tropes of theoretical intentionality to give it a particular prominence in philosophy, claiming that architecture has a special place in the dialectic since it was the first art "to break a path" through the entanglements of time to attempt at least "an adequate representation" of the dialectic of Spirit. Architecture had to be understood conceptually, according to Hegel, and thus non-historiographically. In that sense, this text, as I have tried to outline, is not-Hegelian given that it tries to expose the root disciplinarity of thought.

But to create the illusion of the conceptual, Hegel argued that architecture has to be constituted as a rupture against itself, against the notion that we can talk about architecture as if we already know what architecture is. Architecture is so entangled with sculpture, with issues of religion, and materiality that it is difficult to identify architecture as a singularity of effort. This rupture against itself means, for Hegel, that despite its significance in the dialectic of history, architecture is actually "the most incomplete of all arts," incapable of "portraying the Spirit in a presence adequate to it." Architecture thus hangs in a cultural no man's land, an important part of the history of ideas and yet disappointing in its philosophical rigor. It is given, in Hegel, metaphysical content but not metaphysical purpose. It is this wounded subject that I think architecture still represents back to philosophy much more than in the other arts.

This, I think, can bring us back to the bottom of this article. It brings to light architecture's status as "an incomplete art," incapable of delivering depth, no matter how hard it tries and yet representative of a potential that it can never fulfill. What it can do is deliver the ghostly superstructure that hovers over the aesthetics of talk.

Eisenman's text is an emptying out of the lure of intentionality and purpose in the name of the requirement that architecture be seen in its conceptual bareness, before it becomes the terrible thing that we usually talk

and write about, namely that which goes more conventionally by the word 'architecture'. Can architecture ever overcome the contingent relationship to itself? Absolutely not, architecture is only architecture as long as it remains a conceptual project, but it is possible to put oneself inside the problem, and for that it takes a special training, one that I would venture to say no philosopher or art critic can understand; the special training, alas, of an architect who has stripped philosophy bare to reveal the conceptual possibilities of something akin to architecture.

Clement Greenberg's Queer Laocoön

Caroline A. Jones

What cultural operations find “contamination” where the sculpture called Laocoön meets the archive of its interpretations? They revolve around form, and a set of techniques for regulating genres, and the critic's own sensory self. [Fig. 1]

First: the archive. The identification of this monumental marble as a depiction of the Trojan priest “Laocoön” and his sons was based not on any inscription found on the sculpture itself, but on narratives by the Roman historian Pliny that had been preserved in medieval libraries, memorized by humanists, and mapped on this carving when segments were first excavated in Renaissance Rome on January 14, 1506. Thus, the carved stones reassembled for various photographs are but a small part of the “Laocoönic trope.” The archival Laocoön was periodically resuscitated for the purpose of managing aesthetic anxieties – the most notable perhaps being Clement Greenberg's 1940 essay, “Towards a Newer Laocoön.” Greenberg's principle achievement in this essay was to work out the method that would be called formalism (loosely following the revolutionary Russians, but pruning their politics). That his anxious method was worked out under the name of this particular sculpture is not insignificant – the aesthetic system he brought in was aimed at regulating feelings generated by a compelling representation of male bodies in pain. Laocoön – as image and idea – calls up structures that contain erotic sites of visual and imaginative pleasure, and constrain empathetic responses to these bodies' manifest pain.

Second: desire. It is not necessary to my argument that these systems of pleasure and punishment be exclusively homoerotic. But notably, the Laocoönic trope has functioned to police that possibility, depositing prohibitions that constrain the visual archive and the looks it permits, even while maintaining the danger that keeps its function urgent. With a few notable exceptions, the chain of male interpreters (including Pliny, Sadelius, Winckelmann, Lessing, Blake, Babbitt, Greenberg, and Brilliant) rarely wrote in front of a marble carving. However, all were aware of the

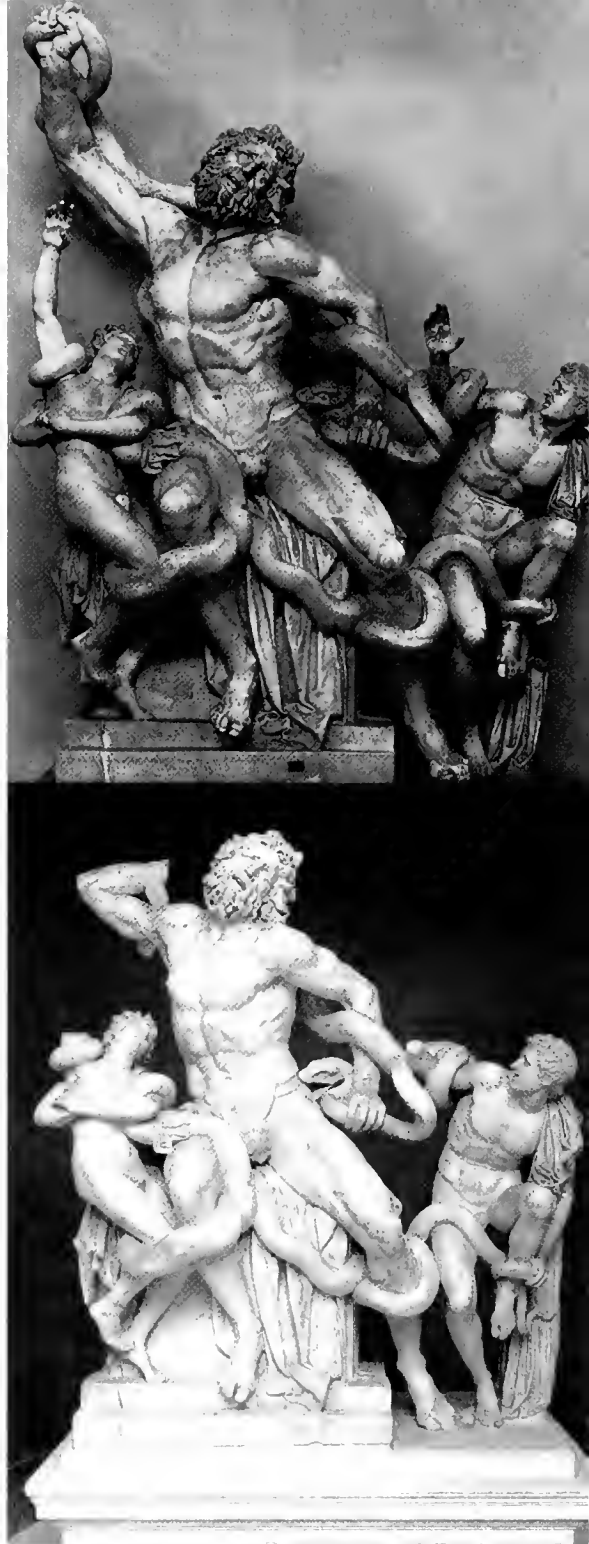


Fig. 1. Comparative photos of sculpture pre 1960 (top) and at present

destabilizing emotions this sculptured image could provoke: "saxo moriente" as 16th century humanist Jacopo Sadoletus put it – "dying in stone."² The mediated archive – a palimpsest of historical texts, excavation plans, poems, restorations, engravings, appreciations, photographs, misprisions, drawings, homages, and iconoclastic screeds – was structured via formalism to regulate the erotics of the male gaze.

Third: the narrative. Back in 1506, Michelangelo and his mentor (architect Giuliano da Sangallo) rushed to the scene where workers had discovered a sculpture (during excavation for routine street maintenance):

*Then they dug the hole wider so that they could pull the statue out. As soon as it was visible everyone started to draw, all the while discoursing on ancient things.*³

The centuries' old sculpture thus arrived into modern imagination already encrusted with narratives of dirt, holes, art, and punitive myth, attributes that would be repeated in various combinations for five hundred years.⁴ Pre-eminently, the sculpture became the primary battle ground for arguments between Enlightenment thinkers Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Gotthard Efraim Lessing, arguments revived in the 20th century by Irving Babbitt and Clement Greenberg. With his "Laocoon" essay, Greenberg successfully launched a career that would dominate modern art in the U.S. for decades. Leading up to that formalist triumph were the diffuse erotics of a "Greek" style friendship that Laocoönic formalism was adopted to constrain.

Pre-formalist Isophilia

Greenberg's beginnings were inauspicious. He graduated Syracuse University in 1930 at the peak of the Depression, coming back to his father's New York apartment where he tried in a desultory way to get a job, polishing his translations of German literature and suffering intermittent bouts of depressive sloth. Holding him together were the letters he wrote weekly or even twice weekly to his friend from college, Harold Lazarus, "still the only Greek in my life."⁵ Here's Clem (as we shall call his pre-published self) writing to Harold in February of 1930:

I live in epical loneliness ... I live in dust, dust on everything,

*dust on French, German and English, dust on my anus, my penis, my nose, my mouth, and if not my heart, my liver. ... Some day I'll gather up my volition and sur-prize them all.*⁶

Clem included a sketch with his letter to Harold, showing not one but a trio of dusty penises that strain towards the Manhattan skyline like sexy avatars of a volitional self [Fig. 2]. Their snaky forms extrude from fenestration, providing a cheap Freudian sight gag for my overarching thematic – anxiety and desire for male bodies on display, their potential for violent penetration eventually figured by Laocoön. To become Greenberg, Clem would need to regulate what he called his "disordinate" sensory self.⁷

Clem also needed Harold, described as "thin, dark, and homosexual...a sympathetic person... kind."⁸ Greenberg's shrinks would call the young men's friendship "isophilic" – a mirroring, indispensable "chumship" that neutralized the poison of the family romance.⁹ In the late nineteen-twenties – years of sweat and struggle for young Clem – the two shared literature as a consummately sensual medium. When Harold sent his friend an edition of Beowulf in 1934, he wrote:

*I envy you, Clem, the virgin pages of this book – so dear, so white. I send you a few instructions, despairing the while that you will follow them, but burning you should. [First,] Don't use a translation; your pleasure, your complete pleasure, will be compromised. ...You wd. make me happy were you to consult me in tough spots*¹⁰

Harold was the archivist of their relationship; his trove of Greenberg's letters permits queer Clement to come into view. The other side of the archive, and our narrative, divides by the "punctum" of Laocoön – where Greenberg's unqueer and normative cultural criticism begins.

We think of Greenberg as making modernism, but first he was made by it. Like the boxes constraining those soft and yearning little phalluses, the regulative formalist modernism he adopted was based on Cubist geometry and Laocoönic tropes. It offered Clement a place to put himself – a hardened and protective architecture that channeled his queer and disordinate longings once and for all. The archive's strata reveal the homosociality that got policed out of Greenberg's optical modernism after

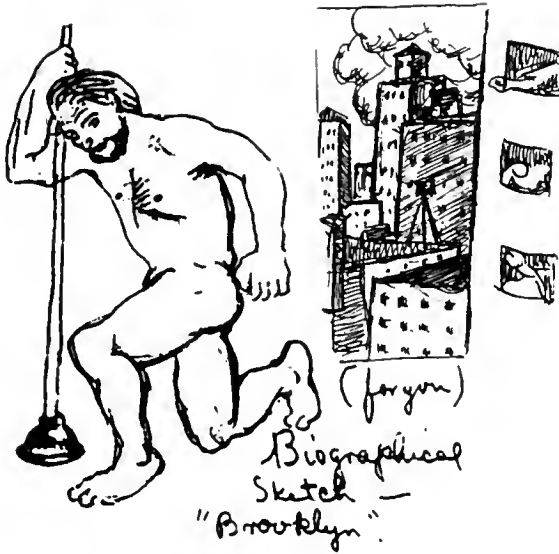


Fig 2 CG, sketch of probing penises, 1930
Fig 3 CG, "Brooklyn's Atlas," 1930

the war, a sociality that was as visual as it was literary – like Laocoön itself.

In 1930, young Clem and his dusty self finally got a lowly job in the Home Title Insurance Company. At the end of the day, his only remaining ties to what he called "civilization" were those weekly letters he wrote to his gay-identified friend, for whom he sketched himself as "Brooklyn's Atlas."

A Greek athlete bearing the leanest, meanest plumber's helper in town, the self-image in this "Biographical Sketch" codified the terms of Clem's chumship with Harold [Fig. 3]. The sign-off in a letter sent just before this one is revealing: "Thusly Hyperion to Diotima."¹¹

Hyperion is Clem, "thusly" communicating to Harold from on high like the eponymous sun-god, whose name means "watches from above." Diotima, on the other hand, is Harold. Outrageously so, for Diotima is the wise prostitute:

*from a tantalizing passage in Plato's Symposium, where Socrates claims to be passing on to his friends what he himself has previously learned about Eros from a woman named Diotima...., who "in this matter was very wise, and in many others as well."*¹²

As Diotima, it would seem that Harold signified

sensory education, his intense aesthetic appreciation coded by Clem as (pedagogically?) erotic, and feminine.

*You know ...you are the only person who I can bear speaking with for more than an hour at a stretch. That's my subtle way of saying that I miss you. We must be soul-mated after all.*¹³

Were they mated in gaze as well as soul? Clem's drawings can be seen as an effort to produce that further link. But theirs was a relationship of distance in which representation and description aestheticize polymorphous male desire. The distance was real, and only infrequently disturbed by actual proximity. "My hand across the mountains, the prairies, the deserts, and the Mississippi," Clem wrote from a West Coast business trip.¹⁴ Harold's hand was what Clem synecdochally wanted. Harold, who had been only half-humorously designated "My Moss and Redemption"¹⁵ – the yearned-for partner ("Diotima") for a physical soul.

Being art was part of the equation [Fig. 4]. In a drawing Clem sent Harold in November 1934, the doubled minotaur presents a Picassooid isophilia. It comes with a wish-fulfilling dream "that ...we both go to Washington" for civil service jobs. It is too late, perhaps, because by this point Clem has acquired his first wife, who has a baby on the way. "It makes me despairing to think of you still where you are," he writes.¹⁶

Clem seems to have offered Harold mostly what he thought Harold might like to see [Fig. 5]. One stretching male nude is a self-portrait, sent with this evocative description:



Fig 4 Double minotaur (17 Nov 34)



Fig. 5 Clem, stretching, naked (8/10/32)

*Last Tuesday I went up into Connecticut... For a moment I was alone on the lake. I was stripped and only the faintest breeze tickled me. The water lapped: lub, lub, plap, plap...*¹⁷

Here there are no anxieties, no violence against the gaze that Clem has invited, no quick shift to heterosexual norms. This display is pantheistic, polymorphous, gloriously scopophilic; the body's pleasure in being naked in nature is simple and complete ("I chase after things like that," Clem concludes.) As he draws himself coyly from behind, perhaps he can imagine a female gaze admiring that muscled arm, that tousled sock, and that hint of scrotum, slack in the summer heat. Yet on the other hand, he is gendered as female in his description, via the choice of a passive construction ("I was stripped" and "tickled"...). By these means, Clem's body is made open to Harold's active gaze, which reads words as well

as looks at pictures. "Anyhow" Clem concludes, "tell me what you do every day, who you see, what you hear. I want petty details." On the opposite coast a year later, things had gotten more complicated. In place of his usual closing – "As ever," or "Ever" – Clem concludes "As ever, maybe."¹⁸ Normative pressures were building, as were the demands of a wife, a child, a mother-in-law.

The drawing in figure sets the scene: stormy, vulnerable to disaster [Fig. 6]. In the face of rough weather, Clem summoned Harold as Horus, Egyptian god of light (partner to earlier Hyperion). Harold's lithe, Horus-headed form faces into the storm, a mirror image of the self-portrait Clem had sent from August 1932 at a calmer time. This November 1933 letter offers praise for Harold's steadfast epistolary support – "How good thou art" Clem writes, "Horus I'll call you, falcon-headed." The letter continues with this play on Harold's given name.. "Haji, Hosea! Hrafn, Hortus, a garden, Harold of the Twisted Neck..." The sudden eruption of violence concluding this litany of gods and heroes announces the arrival of the thought police into Clem's homosocial affections. A little neck-wringing is summoned for the correspondent who stimulated Clement's softest yearnings, even as his imagined body calls waves into raging towers.

Laocoön mapped this problematic: both an emblem of unjust justice (against the Trojan priest who was simply doing his job), and the masculine body upon which the norms of power and self-control will be inscribed. The argument is not dependent on specific sexual practices (which are probably lost to history, but in any case uninteresting to me). It is enough to assert that Clem's images of himself as Atlas, as sensually doubled Minotaur, and as an ideal youth in fearless self-display are manifestly circulating in a world of male-male ("Greek") desire. That, in some sense, was the unexpected residue of a modernizing culture in which "separate spheres" had allocated refinement to the feminine, and worldly achievement to the masculine. Who could Clement be, that he might avoid conscription into business, and luxuriate in a literary world? The "splitting" that Whitney Davis sees in Winckelmann's response to the Laocoön is enacted in the particular subject we have been examining here on several levels. In order for Clement to become Greenberg, in order for literature to be cordoned off from visual art, in order that

the subject might choose a profession (journalism) rather than an avocation (poetry), in order for that professional criticism to become proscriptively normative, Clem had to choose (or accept the choices “society” had made for him). He sided with Apollo – Laocoön must die.

Laocoön Formalism

The most famous passages from Greenberg’s 1940 essay “Towards a Newer Laocoön” involve modern art’s teleological trajectory towards a disembodied abstraction. Summarizing more than a century of modernism, Greenberg wrote:

The arts... have been hunted back to their mediums, and there they have been isolated, concentrated and defined. It is by virtue of its medium that each art is unique and strictly itself... The history of avant-garde painting is that of a progressive surrender to the resistance of its medium; which resistance consists chiefly in the flat picture plane’s denial of efforts to ‘hole though’ it for realistic perspectival space.¹⁹

This would not seem to have much to do with ancient Greco-Roman sculpture. But the Laocoön trope in Greenberg’s title betrays that it is feeling and its regulation that is at hand, and the regulation of “holes” in modern pictures may be connected to other holes in surprising ways. Certainly those “holes” could be feminized – as in the critic’s revulsion against O’Keeffe’s paintings as a monstrous dyad of “hygiene and scatology.” But with “scatology,” Greenberg reveals that anality is the risk – not vaginal excess.²⁰ The Laocoön trope promised to regulate the w(hole) sticky business. Aesthetic methods drew culture from war (for Pliny), and produced for modern viewers (such as Greenberg) an orchestrated plenum where feelings once swirled.

“Feeling is all,” Greenberg would claim in 1952 about Matisse, Pollock, and other artists on the scene – but by then feeling was part of the formal system, the Laocoön regime.²¹ Art would no longer be about spirit, literature, or bodies, but about the foveal empiricism of “eyesight alone.” As the critic explained to his readers, “Truth of feeling in art is in great measure an effect of detachment, but the detachment cannot be too conscious.”²² Indeed, by then detachment was so complete that conscious maintenance was no longer required. “Feeling” had been

the body sense that needed regulating above all others, because rather than the targeted perceptual reflexes that could become increasingly organized by science, commodity culture, and aesthetic training, “feelings” were generalized, nonspecific and undifferentiated – threatening an “undoing” of Greenberg’s fragile self. The critic’s protocols for handling feeling are explicit in that 1952 essay (and this is only one of hundreds using formalist detachment in this way).

How did Laocoön function to form such a subject? Examine the facts at hand: the sculpture, like the myth, circulates around the disturbing question of how best to organize the guilt of benefitting from another’s pain under the violence of normative justice. How to civilize the pleasure of such a gaze? The openness of that question for Pliny, Sadoletus, and even Winckelmann became obscure in Greenberg. Greenberg’s “Laocoön” was solicitous only for the fate of genres (not dying men). But my argument maintains that the subject interpellated under the name of “Laocoön” has a peculiar continuity that we need to understand. The normative, heterosexist, industrial violence that forged a Greenberg out of Clement is mapped in the problematic of Laocoön – whose sin, in some accounts, involved sexual transgressions as well as unseemly vigilance against victorious Greeks.²³

Choosing Laocoön formalism, Clem left the incipient queerness of his drawings for Harold behind him, abandoning them to the archive along with his unfinished novel, his sex diary, his therapy journals, and his



Fig. 6 Harold as Horus (9 Nov 33)

poems. He became a critic, following the dictates of the New Laokoön's Babbitt, who had claimed that only in criticism could genre find its laws, and only in criticism could judgment be both exercised and trained. "That indeed would be the function of criticism at the present hour," Babbitt concluded in 1910: to produce a "firm and masculine distinction" between genres, as an antidote to contemporary problems of "emotional unrestraint" leading to "priapism of the soul."²⁴ Not only did the emergent Greenberg retain Babbitt's mode of analysis, he endorsed the gender anxieties that gave it power. Formalism, for Greenberg, came to function not only as the most powerful articulation of aesthetic law, but as a consummate technology of the self. "Man grows in the perfection proper to his own nature in almost direct ratio to his growth in restraint and self-control," Babbitt

had concluded.²⁵ Formalism, and young Clement's need to regulate the disordinate queer Laokoön, led Greenberg to agree.

Notes

¹ Richard Brilliant, *My Laocoön: Alternative Claims in the Interpretation of Artworks*, Berkeley 2000. 18. Complicating my reading is the fact that by using Hubert Robert's 1773 painting "An Interior of an Imaginary Palace with the Group of the Laocoön," Brilliant himself is part of this "contamination" of the sculpture through layers of interpretation — and indeed titles his book *My Laocoön*.

² Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past*, Yale 1999. 6.

³ Barkan 3, and 341 n. 13.

⁴ The role of dirt and the gender of certain holes also played a role in the special case of the "Hermaphroditus" sculpture dug up from a Roman sewer. As the sculptor and architect Lorenzo Ghiberti reported at the time: "The figure was on spaded earth — turned in such a way to show both the masculine and feminine characteristics — The eye perceived nothing if the hand had not found it by touch." (Barkan, 164–65.)

⁵ 5 April 1931. All letters from Clement Greenberg to Harold Lazarus are from the Greenberg Papers at the Getty Research Institute in Santa Monica California. Some of the letters, and all of the illustrations, are published in *The Harold Letters*, edited by Janice van Horne, San Francisco 2000.

⁶ 8 February 1930.

⁷ 16 February 1939. In this letter, Greenberg ruminates about his son "Buster," then about 6 years old, whom Harold has been helping to care for and in whose problems Greenberg saw his "disordinate" self: "when you mention more and more often his freakishness, his vagaries, his incorrigible brattiness, I know him for my own son — That's the way I was at his age: wild, timid and unaccountable — brutal and tearful, full of disordinate impulses: once, for no reason at all, I axed a goose — I was six. I didn't know how to act, how to handle my existence, and that still remains. All these things take a long war to overcome."

⁸ Marty Greenberg (Clement's brother), quoted in *The Harold Letters*, op. cit. 298.

The "chumship" was theorized by Harry Stack Sullivan, "rather of interpersonal psychotherapy" and himself a beneficiary of the "isophilic" relationship that homosexuality ideally models. Greenberg's therapy with a group of self-styled "radical Sullivanians" extended for almost a decade from around 1956 to 1965 or so. See Jones, *Eye-Sight Alone: Clement Greenberg's Modernism and the*

Reorientation of the Senses, Chicago 2005. 2008.

⁹ Harold Lazarus to Clement Greenberg (undated), as cited in *The Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300.

¹⁰ 30 October 1930.

¹¹ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ¹² *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ¹³ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ¹⁴ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ¹⁵ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ¹⁶ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ¹⁷ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ¹⁸ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ¹⁹ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ²⁰ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ²¹ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ²² *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ²³ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ²⁴ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300. ²⁵ *Harold Letters*, op. cit. 300.

¹² <http://www.stoa.org/diotima/about.shtml>, as of March 2004.

¹³ 22 June 1928.

¹⁴ See *The Harold Letters*, op. cit. 111.

¹⁵ 24 July 1928.

¹⁶ 14 November 1934.

¹⁷ 10 August 1932.

¹⁸ 29 October 1933.

¹⁹ Clement Greenberg, "Towards a Newer Laocoön," 1941, as anthologized in Greenberg, *Collected Essays and Criticism*, John O'Brian, editor, Chicago 1988. Vol. 1. 32, 34.

²⁰ See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet*, Berkeley 1990. 199. Guy Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire*, Durham 1993. 83; Richard Meyer, *Outlaw Representation*, Oxford 2002. 196. Meyer marshalls Sedgwick and Hocquenghem to argue for analitv's utopian, libetory potential, I am struck by their emphasis on the anal as a site for privatization of the self. The construction of Greenberg was a self-fashioning as public, the anal image of himself in that 1930 letter is precisely what must be "put behind" him.

²¹ Originally this phrase occurred in a letter to Harold (October 4, 1940) in which Clement moaned about his troubles with women: "love's what I want. Feeling is all. The main thing is to feel, feel." This was amalgamated with the letter of 25 September, 1940 in *The Harold Letters*. 226, transcribed as "The end of all is to feel deeply."

²² Greenberg, *Collected Essays and Criticism*, Vol. 3 (1995): 102.

²³ A variant (from Servius, himself based on Euporion) has Laocoön not a priest of Poseidon (source for the serpents) but a priest of Apollo. In this version, Laocoön had offended the god by having sex with his wife on the altar, his sons were killed by the serpent and dragged into the sanctuary, titting the punishment to the crime. Here heterosexual sex is punished by phallic poison. Virgil, *Aeneid II*, 201–225, has yet another account.

²⁴ Irving Babbitt, *The New Laocoön*, Boston and New York 1910. 244.

²⁵ Babbitt. 202.

More Notes on Camp: A formulary for a New (Camping) Urbanism

Charlie Hailey

[*Etymologia*: Camp's derivation reflects the contradictions of use that we might expect from a fluid field of meaning. As *choros* in Homeric texts, camp is the cleared open space of the temporary military camp – the "piece of ground" where assembled Trojans light campfires and Hector delivers a rousing speech. Anchored by clearing and speech-making, this specificity of siting also connotes directionality and positioning – both toward and on the ground. As Latinate *campus*, camp denotes a level field, relevant also to an obsolete use describing the 'watery camp' of the sea.¹ Water and military exercises combine in Rome's Campus Martius, where flood-prone land, ostensibly the "field of Mars," also accommodates public assembly and recreation.

In more contemporary military terms, camps are strategic outposts and temporary housing, classified between bivouac and cantonment in their semi-permanence. Permanent in our wartime memories both past and current are the deep wounds of camp's further permutations of internment and detainment. Camp is not just site but also indicates idea, association, and procedure. The *Oxford English Dictionary* further mobilizes camp as a body of troops moving together and, more conceptually, as a group of adherents subscribing to a commonly held doctrine – a political camp with its defensible position of beliefs, often protected by a veritable "army" of facts or arguments. As a method of negotiating sites with its conceptual and physical strata ranging from *choros* to politics, camp is an epistemological ground "opened" for debate.

In camp's more modern use to describe recreational sites, one historical thread runs through the late 18th and 19th

century camp meetings that formed nodes of religious practice along an itinerant preacher's circuit – mystical in their forested contexts and exuberant in their retreat from urban distraction. One instance of the camp meeting's recreational turn from religious to secular objectives occurred between Wesleyan Grove's revival-tent communalism and the increasingly permanent tourism of the Oak Bluffs cottages. Municipal camps followed with the rise of auto-camping groups like the Tin Can Tourists of the World, who first convened in Tampa's De Soto Park in 1919. And in Europe, where caravanning has a long history, recreation's hyper-thematization was already complete with Sir Billy Butlin's English holiday camps of the 1930s.² The emergence of recreational camping also parallels inchoate uses of camp to describe performative practice and sensibility. And for author Christopher Isherwood, aesthetic sensibility³ becomes philosophical method – ground covered one hundred years earlier by American thinkers in the philosopher's camps of the Adirondacks.

Camp's permutations move between physical and metaphysical places, mobility and fixity, conditions of freedom and control, and formalized space and aesthetic presentation. The "fugitive"⁴ nature of camp encompasses an indeterminate and at the same time rigorous "forming" such that camp and camping might come together as field research and as a field of investigation. Its paradoxes maintained, camp's field of meaning provides both format and method for these notes. And given camp's etymology, the charge of this formulary is not to resolve paradox but to understand the "field" itself.]

Within the unsettling range of camp's historical functions, I will focus on the post-disaster camp, with particular attention to Hurricane Katrina responses. Recently, many proposals have sought to address post-disaster camping vehicles and units of housing, but camp's environment has been afforded much less consideration. Not for the first time but perhaps most strikingly given the hurricane's magnitude of destruction and its media coverage, the camps set up in Louisiana and Mississippi have made visible the process of re-forming an American city under pressures of time, politics, and identities and economies of urban space. Almost two years later, we find ourselves still immersed in the process of this transition from camp to city. At issue is the forming of camp. Picking up on Giorgio Agamben's recent discussion of camp as state of exception, these notes also look to post-disaster camps as sites of resistance in which the process of redefining city and polis reveals as much as it hides.⁵ It is the flexibility of camps that allows for their functional diversity, ranging from control to autonomy. In their form, these notes track camp's contradictions. Moving from campsite to campsite, they are both speculative and concrete. Camping form includes expository moments, even tentative didacticism, and ultimately involves negotiation.⁶ What results is a constellation of formulae – some prescribed, many needing continued revision, others now being written, and still others resolutely unformed.⁷ These notes narrate fugitive form.

*A camping area is a form, however primitive, of a city.*⁸

1. To begin connotatively, camp is a field, a leveled field of battle and competition, and the open field of the country (as opposed to the city). In military terminology, the camp denotes both a temporary site to lodge troops and a more permanent strategic stationing.

2. To camp is to clear space for a provisional city. The formalization of the military camp as Roman castrum initiates an urban form. Solidification of the camp as a place, as a community, and as a city has resulted in cities like Vienna, Prague, Barcelona, and Manchester.

3. The originary camp also entails a more primeval occupation of place. The camp is an archetypal site for shelter in Gottfried Semper's architectural elements. Camping as clothing. In The *Iliad* Hector delivers a triumphant speech from his encampment's communal center,

an 'open space cleared of the dead.' Aaron Betsky finds the birth of architecture and patriarchy in the mandala forms of the campground. These geometric forms recall the plan of Louis Kahn's Day Camp at the Trenton Jewish Community Center, in which a square grove of trees surrounds the camp circle, where the campfire pit is the focal point of the seating units. The space of the camp suggests its function through an essential and ultimately foundational form.

*I admit it's terribly hard to define. You have to meditate on it and feel it intuitively, like Lao-tse's Tao.*⁹

4. Camp's connotative range also encompasses idea and method. For Christopher Isherwood, camp is "the way" – a fluid yet ordered intuitive mode. Camp is performative, in the playfulness of method acting and in the definition of style or taste. Deleuzian movement from campsite to campsite might also be read as an aphoristic practice of becoming.

5. The inherent flexibility and lightness of camp allows for habitability of the seemingly uninhabitable and a suitability of the apparently inappropriate. The post-disaster camp is paradoxical, it is ironic, it cannot be elegiac, and it is often an unhomely home-away-from-home. An ephemeral fixity parallels expectations of mobility. Post-disaster responses counter this flexibility with planned housing installations. The post-disaster camp is formed and formless.

6. Practices of recreational camping follow the sequence of siting, clearing, making, breaking, re-siting... The post-disaster camp collapses this sequence; it is neither ritualized nor romanticized.

*It is not hierarchical, and it is difficult to define as a separate place: it does not have an inside and outside so much as it has a center and a periphery.*¹⁰

7. Camp is as much method as space. If post-disaster conditions are by nature "states of exception," then how a situation is addressed remains critical. Methods of response form camps. In some cases, the camp form is applied (the contract plans in New Orleans); and in other contexts, the camp grows from an unregulated response (Survivor's Village).

8. Camp as method might be construed to mirror contemporary life. Eileen Gray addressed the 'camping method' in her house designs as a necessary way of life, but one that she hoped would pass, as wartime effects

and the freneticism of social life receded. For her, it was a necessity that the camping life remain a temporary concept.

9. Urban camping adapts to the complexity of a city's forces. The neutrality, efficiency, and normative design of Federal Emergency Management's (FEMA's) contracted plans disallow this urban interaction and rely on open space with a previously leveled ground, away from the city, or in rare cases within a city's major green spaces. Officials proposed New Orleans' City Park as a site for post-disaster trailer parks. FEMA has contracts with Fluor, Bechtel, and Shaw Group to plan its "temporary group housing sites."

10. Camps can serve simultaneously as sites of housing and protest. Displaced residents of St. Bernard Housing Development have formed Survivor's Village, a tent city in the 3800 block of St. Bernard Avenue, to protest HUD's closure of public housing.

11. Camps are not gated communities, but they sometimes exist as enclaves. In the urban context of New Orleans, a camp is a 'city within a city'. The juxtaposition of camp and pre-existing community elicited a cease-and-desist order from New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin on March 24, 2006.

Instant villages... (camping scene not included)¹¹

12. After a disaster, the camp is a necessary form of temporary housing and relief operations. Immediately before or during a disaster, the form of a camp must adapt to available spaces and necessary scales. At 8 a.m. on August 28, the Superdome became a "refuge of last resort" [Figure 1]. Evacuees, who would soon be called "refugees," were asked to prepare for their disaster accommodation as if they were "planning to go camping." Loss of privacy among 30,000 disaster victims was countered by the expectation of safety, a condition compromised by the tearing of the arena-tent's weathering membrane in the hurricane force winds. Many evacuees remained in the Superdome until September 4 when relocation to the Astrodome was completed [Figure 2].

13. Other new and unexpected forms of the camp include the cruise ship and the convention center. The decks of a Carnival Cruise Lines ship served as a campsite for 7,000 evacuees on September 4, 2005 [Figure 3]. The ships Holiday, Ecstasy, and Sensation were also contracted to house evacuees. Michel Foucault's heterotopia

had been formed.

14. Bus terminals became camps of detainment. Camp Greyhound in New Orleans' Union Passenger Terminal held fugitives and violators of the post-disaster curfew.

15. The post-disaster camp is also a dispersed network of individually leased sites. FEMA Form 90-96 administers a "Temporary Housing Pad Lease" [Figure 4]. Negotiated by the FEMA Field Representative, this contract structures the agreement between the owner of a site and a disaster victim. Its agreement stipulates that the "initial term of the lease should be for the shortest possible period that can be negotiated with the Owner/Agent and shall not exceed 90 days without authorization." The concrete pad is a residual part of the post-disaster landscape.

16. Some camps combine house and trailer. This coupling reverses the romantic notion of living on the construction site. Marcel Breuer designed around his client's Spartan trailer (Manson Model) for the Wolfson Trailer House, but how might FEMA trailers be integrated within rebuilding the houses of New Orleans?

17. A formulary is a set of forms with blanks that are to be filled. In the city of New Orleans, post-disaster camps were proposed for playgrounds, parking lots, City Park, university campus, and sports fields. The camp then becomes a strategy of urban infill.

18. To clear camp is to make room for camping space. The urban clearing for camps is passive rather than active. Not large-scale urban renewal, but localized urban regeneration. Selective infill must resolve leases, neighborhood politics, and infrastructure of access and utilities. Flood insurance currently impedes many attempts at this type of urban intervention.

Once they are there then they are there. The portability is a misnomer to a degree.¹²

19. Camp form resists permanence. A predetermined transience (90 days with a pad lease and 18 months with a trailer lease) is fundamental to the FEMA's deployment of "temporary group housing sites." At the same time, the inherent fixity of the mobile home park is a confirmed reality of our built environment.

20. Camp is as much time as space. How the response is sustained and how it lingers and eventually solidifies defines the timing of the camp. If camp time is duration,

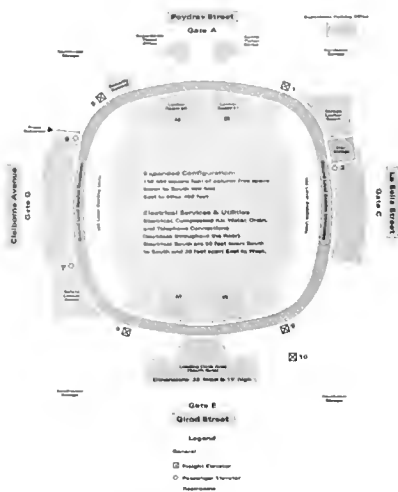


Fig. 1 Facilities plan of Louisiana Superdome

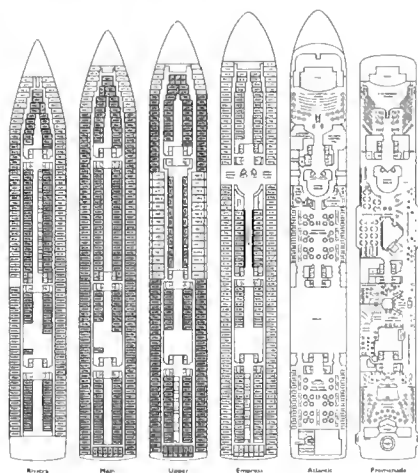


Fig. 3 Carnival Cruise Line deck plans



Fig. 4 Houston AstroDome with Hurricane Katrina evacuees

then its events are layered, and public and private interpenetrate. But to maintain camping as duration requires the possibility of mobility and a qualitative multiplicity of successive states. When realities of mobility are constrained (and the exceptional state of the post-disaster camp is fixed), the space of the camp overrides the freedoms of time.

21. Camp form eludes classification. Yet, "FEMA City" now designates many of the agency's post-disaster housing sites, from the rooted settlements that remain after Florida's 2004 hurricane season to the many sites currently found across the northern Gulf Coast.

The camp, which is now securely lodged within the city's interior, is the new biopolitical nomos of the planet.¹³

22. Camps have historically subverted the normative city. Embedded within North America's cities, municipal camps catered to a nascent culture of trailer travel. These spaces, initially considered as economic assets, allowed for a proximity and isolation within the host city. But in the 1920s and 30s, the tourists lingered too long, and municipalities closed the camps.

23. A diverse set of vehicles and units provide shelter in camps. FEMA Form 81-96, a worksheet for documenting loss after a disaster, registers this array: "Manufactured (Mobile) Home/Travel Trailer" [Figures 5 and 6]. The protean camping unit produces a new syntax: the interpolating parenthetical and the hybridizing slash-mark. The diagram of the housing unit in 81-96 becomes an additional formulary for a lost domestic life, its impossibly elongated blank space a memory theatre of displacement.

A camp meeting however is a thing so outrageous in its form and in its practices that I resolved to go to one.¹⁴

24. The original camp meeting form occurred outside of the city. Such religious expression was allowed for in the country. The provisionality and fervor of the camp fostered a kind of transcendental experience. Today we have the secularized zeal of Burning Man [Figure 7].

25. The popularity of the theme camp has been instrumentalized in disaster situations. In southern Mississippi, Camp Katrina serves as a mechanism of response for "burners" with a "predilection" for thematizing: "it's what they know." As a result, this Burning Man theme camp near Biloxi has spawned the meme camp – a post-disaster response evolving not by applied types but through the forming of successively new spaces intrinsically coded by specific needs.

26. The scale of the recreational campsite and the proximity of its occupants have traditionally motivated social interaction. Officials initially disallowed the formation of a central tent space in the FEMA camp "Renaissance Village" near Baton Rouge. Residents now hold religious and community services in a donated tent.

27. Philosophers in the Adirondacks camped out to escape quotidian life. We perhaps no longer have that luxury, but the trope of the transcendent camping experience asks us to reconsider what this 'state of exception' has become.

28. The post-disaster camp risks militarization. Security officers of Renais-

sance Village refer to the camp as the “installation” – alarmingly recalling militarized detainment and internment camps.

29. The camp can no longer be romanticized as a place of escape from the urban experience. The Jeffersonian campus cannot distance itself from urban distraction and its ‘congested culture’ in an agrarian dream. But this is not a loss or negation. The campus, not in its isolation, but in its potential engagement, might be the field model, the camp par excellence, of our post-disaster world. Immediately after Hurricane Katrina, we heard interviews of Tulane University administrators speaking from Richmond, Virginia, where admissions offices had been relocated. University president Scott Cowan worked from a provisional office in Houston, and Tulane’s students and faculty joined university communities across the nation. In spite of this fragmentation and its dislocation from New Orleans, the newly constituted campus network had begun immediately the institution’s re-formation.

This theme fulfills the basic requirements for a camper’s shelter: a protected back, an open front, a fireplace and a roof.¹⁵

30. Section 408 of the Stafford Act authorizes FEMA



Fig. 5 New Orleans residence with FEMA trailer

to provide emergency temporary housing for disaster victims through the agency’s Individual Assistance Program.

31. Is a camp a home? FEMA contends that the post-disaster dwelling unit itself cannot be a house or a home. FEMA rejects the “Katrina Cottage” in its mission to provide temporary housing assistance, not houses. The 1974 Stafford Act prevents FEMA’s provision of permanent residential construction.

32. We rarely find section drawings of camps. Plan representations dominate the imaging of camps. Aerial photographs, satellite images, and contracted plans define for us the contemporary post-disaster camp. Sections through camps might reveal the human scale and the intensively layered ground of the camp experience. Only Louis Kahn and Carlo Scarpa dared to draw the camp section. And R.M. Schindler re-made the tent flaps of his Yosemite campsite in the tilt walls of the Kings Road house.

33. Layers form a camp. Ritually, campfires leave the temporally charged, ashen strata of successive occupations. After a disaster, programs overlay one another in a rupture of everyday use: sites of recreation become zones of crisis, and military camps are staging areas for relief efforts.

What it [camp] does is to offer for art (and life) a different – a supplementary – set of standards.¹⁶

34. Camps are populist precedents for modernist, utopian built environments. Constant Nieuwenhuis visited the gypsy camp at Alba before producing the Model for a Gypsy Camp and then designing New Babylon. The gypsy community had been banned from Alba’s public spaces, and Constant visited their improvised set-

| DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TEMPORARY HOUSING UNIT PAD LEASE | | THIS APPLICATION NO. |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| STATE | COUNTY | LEASE NO. (To be assigned by Fiscal Officer) |
| THIS LEASE is made and entered into pursuant to the provisions of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and all rules and regulations promulgated thereunder on _____, 20____ between _____ (FEMA Lease Representative) and _____ (Lessee) (Name, Title, Organization) | | |
| herein called the "FEMA" and U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency hereon called the "FEMA". | | |
| WITNESSETH | | |
| 1. The FEMA hereby leases to the Lessee the following described Temporary Housing Unit Pad and premises: (FEMA) | | |
| 2. The Lessee agrees to provide and maintain all water, sanitary sewage, electrical, other utilities, connections, provided on the site at the time of execution of this lease. | | |
| 3. The rent shall be _____ dollars per month per pad, payable in advance on the first day of each and every calendar month. In case of failure of the pad at any time other than the first of the month, pro rata rent charge shall be made based upon 1/30th of a month's rent from the day of lease to the end of the month of occupancy. | | |
| 4. The term of THIS LEASE shall begin on _____, 20____, and end at midnight on _____, 20____ for a total rent of _____ and _____ dollars. In consideration of the above, the Lessee, its contractors, and assigns, shall maintain and occupy the same on a month-to-month basis at the same monthly rate as stated above for a period not to exceed one (1) year from the date of the lease. The rent may be renegotiated annually. All other conditions shall continue in effect except the term. | | |
| 5. The Lessee may terminate THIS LEASE in its entirety or as to any one or more designated pads on any day of the month by giving the FEMA 30 days written notice thereof delivered to the FEMA at _____ (FEMA Representative). | | |
| 6. It is understood by the parties hereto that THIS LEASE may be assigned to another government entity or agency. It is further understood that the Temporary Housing Unit Pad and premises shall be used in accordance with the provisions of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. The Lessee shall not discriminate against any of the Lessee's tenants or prospective tenants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, sex, age, handicap, status as a handicapped person. | | |
| 7. The Lessee agrees to maintain the leased pad and premises in good repair during the term of THIS LEASE. The Lessee agrees to keep said leased pad and premises in a clean and orderly condition and agree to surrender the same in as good a state and condition as at the commencement of the term hereof, reasonably use, wear and tear thereof excepted. | | |
| 8. Personal property provided on the premises and otherwise furnished by the Lessee shall be inspected for condition and shall be maintained in the condition of the premises. The Lessee shall be responsible for the beginning date of the occupancy of the personal property and premises. The Lessee shall be responsible for the condition of the premises and shall be responsible for the condition of the premises at the time of the expiration of the term hereof. The Lessee shall return the personal property and the premises in the condition existing at the time of entry, reasonably use, wear and tear excepted. | | |
| 9. The Lessee agrees to permit the FEMA or its agents or employees to enter the leased pad and premises during normal business hours for the purpose of making inspections or repairs. | | |
| 10. The Lessee agrees not to make any repairs, alterations, or change to the leased premises without the consent of the FEMA. | | |
| IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have set their hands the day and year first above written. | | |
| LESSOR (Name of FEMA) | TITLE AND SIGNATURE OF LESSOR | DATE |
| SIGNATURE OF FEMA REPRESENTATIVE | | DATE |
| LESSEE | FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY | |
| CHECK PAYMENT INFORMATION | | |
| NAME OF PAYEE | DATE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NO. | STATE |
| ADDRESS OF PAYEE (Street number, name, city, state and zip code) | | |

FEMA Form 90-96, OCT 04

REPLACES ALL PREVIOUS EDITIONS

Fig. 4 FEMA Form 90-96, “Temporary Housing Unit Pad Lease”

41. On April 6, 2006, 8,000 trailers were promised by June. As many as 1,500 trailers were in place within “enclosed” urban sites, 10,000 trailers were in yards and side-lots, and 10,000 residents were still waiting for trailers to be delivered.

Fig. 6. FEMA Form 81-96, Manufactured (Mobile) Home/Travel Trailer Worksheet



42. Localized transformations made within camps expose global economic and political forces of conflict and exchange.

43. The post-disaster camp intensifies hesitations at departure. This unique permanency is not of deferral but of necessity. Deracination having been partially reversed, camp is a home away from a non-extant home.

*An encampment that has settled, but without solidifying completely...*²⁰

44. A camp is an unfinished city.

45. To break camp is to begin the process of departing. But, in camping, departure only temporarily reverses the move to permanence. The siting of camp is lodged within its breaking.

46. The fugitive forms of camp cannot be found in the trailer staging areas of Hope, Arkansas.

47. Not spaces of flight or eviction; places lightly teth-

ered as an unfolding polis.

*These rules do not trace a method, but very precisely an exodus, a capricious and seemingly irregular trek constrained by the obligation to avoid speculative places held by force...*²¹

48. If we cannot define the post-disaster camp, we might meditate on its paradoxical forms.

²⁰ I knowledgably frame to radicalize my ongoing methodological and editorial work. The project began with my articulation at the University of Florida and has emerged from background material in my exploration of the practices of camping that will be published by Louisiana State University Press. And the research for this essay has then served as the initial provocations and framework for a subsequent project with contemporary camp spaces, forthcoming from MIT Press.

Notes

¹ *Caeruleus campus* is a dark blue level place, and *campus latus aquarium* is a broad watery place.

² Camp's military legacy soon returned with the conversion of Butlin's Skene camp to a wartime base in the 1940s.

³ As early as 1909 in J. Redding Ware's *Passing English of the Victorian Era*, camp denotes "actions and gestures of exaggerated emphasis."

⁴ In her 1964 essay "Notes on Camp," Susan Sontag opens up a penultimate critical space to investigate what she calls a "fugitive sensibility."

⁵ Giorgio Agamben has written extensively about the camp's prevalence as the normative, biopolitical model for contemporary urban spaces. In these "states of exception," the suspension of normal law becomes the rule. See *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (1998) and *Means without End* (2000).

⁶ The ideas of camp as fugitive form and camping as a process of negotiation discussed in these notes are not unlike Lebbeus Woods' proposed tactics to design a second-order system, rules of rules for practice in sites of trauma, conflict, and destruction. See *Radical Reconstruction* (2001).

⁷ Taken as a formulary, this essay follows Ivan Chitchevlov's baroque urbanism and its embedded stories of place-making. See Chitchevlov's "Formulary for a New Urbanism" <http://www.bopsecrets.org/SI/Chitchevlov.htm>.

⁸ Constant Nieuwenhuis, "New Urbanism," Published in *Provo* #9 (1966). English translation published by The Friends of Malatesta (Buffalo, NY, 1970) <http://www.nothing.org/new-urbanism.html> (accessed August 15, 2006).

⁹ Christopher Isherwood, *The World in the Evening* (New York: Random House, 1954), 106.

¹⁰ Aaron Betsky, *Building Sex: Men, Women, Architecture and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: Wilham Morrow, 1995), 10.

¹¹ David Greene, "Gardener's notebook," *Archigram*, ed. Peter Cook (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 110-115.

¹² Paul Rudolph, Interview with Robert Bruegmann, compiled in "Chicago Architects Oral History Project" (The Ernest R. Graham Study Center for Architectural Drawings, Department of Architecture, The Art Institute of Chicago, 28 February 1986), 34.

¹³ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 176.

¹⁴ Benjamin Latrobe quoted in Talbot Hamlin, *Benjamin Henry Latrobe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), 180. In spite of this formalized separation that Latrobe finds in the actual experience of the place is a public diversion that engages what he calls "scattered inhabitants [in] a night scene of the illumination of the woods, the novelty of a camp—the dancing and the singing, and the pleasure of the crowd, so tempting to the most fashionable" (319).

¹⁵ R. M. Schindler, "A Cooperative Dwelling," *T-Square* 2 (February 1932): 21, in August Sarnitz, R. M. Schindler *Architect: A Pupil of Otto Wagner Between International Style and Space Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 49.

¹⁶ Susan Sontag, "Notes on Camp," *Against Interpretation and Other Essays* (New York: Dell, 1964), 276.

¹⁷ Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter, *Collage City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1978), 107.

¹⁸ R.E. Somol, "The Camp of the New," *ANY* 1994, no 9: 52-3.

¹⁹ Constant Nieuwenhuis (1966).

²⁰ Michel Butor, *The Spirit of Mediterranean Places*, trans. Lydia Davis (Marlboro, VT: Marlboro Press, 1986), 23-4. Michel Butor captures the paradoxes of camp in his description of the unsoldified permanence and hardened ephemerality of the vernacular camp constructions that became Istanbul: "An encampment that has settled, but without solidifying completely; huts and shanties that have been enlarged and improved, that have been made comfortable, but without ever losing their ephemeral feeling. Turkish Istanbul is truly the expression of an empire that collapsed on itself as soon as it stopped growing. In the great bazaars awning had turned into roof." The encampment, though "enlarged" and "improved," does not lose its transient quality, even within a growing permanency.

²¹ Michel Serres, *The Troubadour of Knowledge* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 43.

Ducks Versus Joules: Electric Visions of Las Vegas in the Energy Crisis

Lydia Kallipoliti

Armed with his reputable and luscious enthusiasm for American glitz, Tom Wolfe in his 1964 essay "Las Vegas (What?) Las Vegas (Can't Hear you! Too Noisy) Las Vegas!!!" cites his illuminating conversation with Major A. Riddle, the president of the Las Vegas Dunes Hotel. Riddle, in his attempt to verbalize the hype of spectacle he intended to launch in his hotel, explains heartily that all of it was possible because of "complicated machinery." Programmable machinery would be the means of exciting all senses and eventually provoking an ecstatic experience: the *hyper-spectacle*.

The beauty of the Dunes' Casino de Paris is that it will be beyond art, beyond dance, beyond spectacle, even beyond the titillations of the winking crotch. The Casino de Paris will be a behemoth piece of American calculus, like Project Mercury.

(Riddle): 'This show alone will cost us two and a half million a year to operate and one and a half million to produce. The costumes alone will be fantastic. There'll be more than five hundred costumes and-well, they'll be fantastic.'

(Riddle continues): 'And this machine - by the time we get through expanding the stage, this machine will cost us \$250,000.'

(Wolfe): 'Machine?'

(Riddle). 'Yes. Sean Kenny is doing the staging. The whole set moves electronically, right in front of your eyes. He used to work with this fellow Lloyd Right.'

(Wolfe): 'Frank Lloyd Right?'

(Riddle): 'Yes. Kenny did the staging for Blitz. Did you see it? Fantastic. Well, it's all done electronically. They built this machine for us in Glasgow, Scotland, and it's being shipped here right now. It moves all over the place and creates smoke and special effects. We'll have everything. You can stage a bombardment with it. You'll think the whole theater is blowing up.'

(Riddle continues): 'You'll have to program it. They had to use the same mechanism that's in the Skybolt Missile to build it. It's called a 'Celson' or something like that. That's how complicated this thing is. They have to have the same thing as the Skybolt Missile.'

Riddle's uneducated elucidations, which may now echo closer to reality, were bound to provoke astonishment if not laughter. Besides, in that day, programming a machine numerically to recreate a virtual environment was an elusive task¹, rendered comprehensible solely via its wobbly connection with the operations of the space program. Still, Riddle in all his partial ignorance, managed to grasp and enunciate coherently something most scholars and vanguard architectural critics of the time neglected, that beneath the glittering city resides a phantom of colossal proportions - a network of electrical and mechanical infrastructure. The scintillating wonders of Las Vegas are thereby revealed as more than abstractly atmospheric; they are instead presented as the products of concrete calculations induced by machines programmed to

produce virtual environments that enhance and rebuild one's perception of built space. To sustain the wonder, the city cannot be switched off; it is bound to devour and transfigure energy day and night, out in the middle of the Nevada desert.⁴ In agreement with Riddle, the narrator of the anecdote argues that the essence of Las Vegas' achievement was the absolute wiring of its entire locale with electronic stimulation.⁵ However, such a reading of architectonic space, sharply articulated, was largely overlooked by architects, who were neither trained nor encouraged to look beyond structural readings of physical space. Conceptually, such an outlook would force a reconsideration of the discipline itself; a discipline, which remained incapable of considering numerical information - watts and joules for instance - as design components. Evaluating data was too concrete a reading of space, one that was not readily conceptualized and that would impede designers from expressing the accompanying verbal narratives that legitimize their products.

Wolfe's literary debut, his collection of essays *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine Flake Streamline Baby*, became one of the first works of cultural criticism to embrace, psychoanalyze and legitimize the bizarre landscapes of American pop abundance. His perverse cultural attraction to seemingly "unworthy" sites of exploration quickly infiltrated design thinking. In the reputedly crass American vernacular - fabulous hairdos, automobile parts, dazzling car paints and advertising billboards - Wolfe saw a compelling visual and formal language⁶ that could inform design practice. He then paired this formal perspective with an electronic one, by including signage, projections and moving images, claiming that in both billboards and buildings in Las Vegas, structure and electrical effect were inseparable; lighting and structure were combined into a singular architectural form.⁷ This fusion, coined "Electrographic Architecture"⁸ appeared in a homonymous article in *Architectural Design* magazine, which introduced Wolfe as an extraordinary

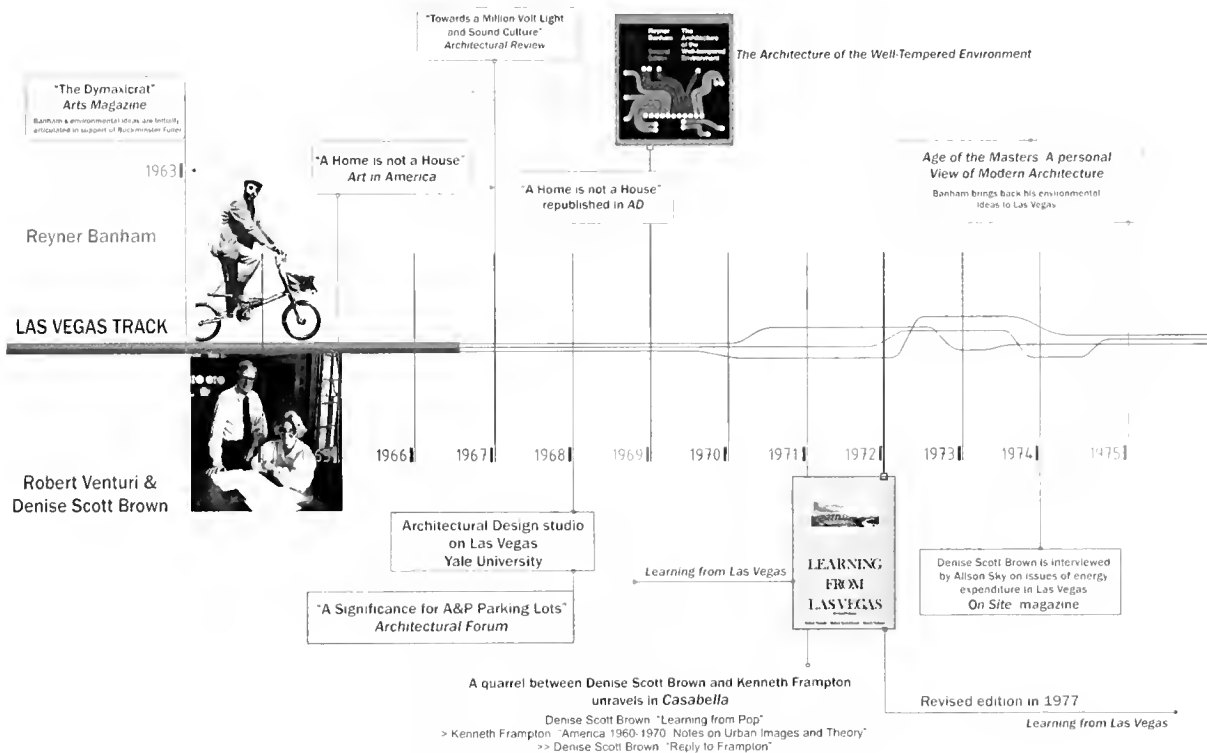


Fig. 1 Author's comparative diagram between Robert Venturi & Denise Scott Brown's and Reyner Banham's writings on Las Vegas

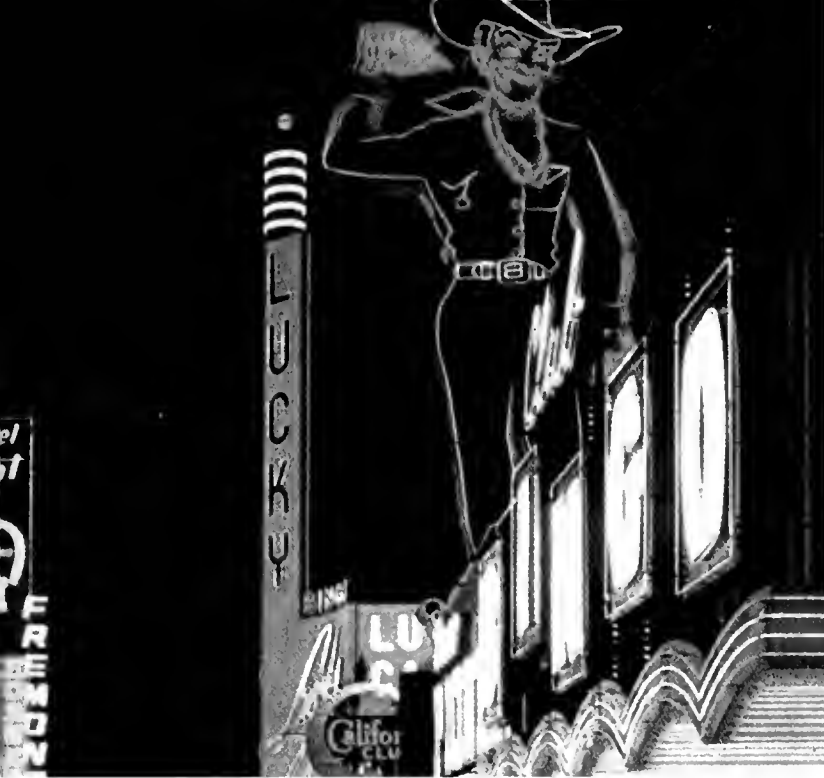
journalist who gave a "side-swipe to architects" with his apocalyptic architectural apparitions.

Wolfe's tripartite message to architects⁹ - endorse "pop" landscapes, consider electricity as a space making device and investigate urban space as an interior space of spectacles - was appropriated distinctly by two preeminent architectural theorists and thinkers, Robert Venturi with Denise Scott-Brown, and Reyner Banham. These authors wrote, researched and concurrently published articles on Las Vegas during the late 1960s and the early 1970s, always citing Wolfe as a source of inspiration. However, despite their shared passion for Wolfe and the academic proximity of their interests, they never acknowledged one another's work. We may surmise some unavowed quarrel existed between the architects. Denise Scott-Brown's testimony is telling: "I met Banham at the ICA in London in the mid 1950s. I could never understand this man."¹⁰ Compounding the dispute between the two critics, we may argue that they divided Wolfe's premise in half, each addressing a different aspect of his message: Venturi and Scott-Brown adopted "pop" forms, as typified in ducks, while Banham adopted Wolfe's electrical vision, as expressed in joules. But to fully understand their respective positions and implications, let us first consider their work. [Fig 1] Banham's first article on Las Vegas, "Towards a Million-Volt Light and Sound Culture,"¹¹ was published in *Architectural Review*, almost a year earlier than Venturi and Scott-Brown's inaugural publication, "A Significance for A&P Parking Lots" and their affiliated design studio at Yale University in the fall of 1968. His first encounter with Las Vegas glorified Wolfe's discoveries and set the groundwork for the theorization of pop landscapes. It was two years later in his seminal book *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*¹² that Banham elaborated his argument on Las Vegas as a prototypical found object of environmental ideas. Banham, like Venturi and Scott Brown, first defended Las Vegas on account of its villainization as a "visually polluted," careless urban landscape. Yet for Banham, Las Vegas also represented an indispensable encyclopedic tool for the technologically uneducated architect¹³ who needed to expand the field of his expertise in order to comprehend and manipulate the technical innovations flooding his discipline. Banham was staunchly critical of the architect's ceaseless desire

to "architecturalize" the universe philosophically and endow with *logos* all design products.¹⁴ He was pointedly apathetic towards any structural or visual studies of the city that would ground its architectural value. Instead he passionately espoused Wolfe's interpretation of Las Vegas as a "behemoth piece of calculus," alluding to it as a catalyst for the advancement of the discipline itself. Accordingly, Las Vegas' exemplary historic stature was related to neither its physical nor its visual presence, but to the annihilation of its structure in favor of what Banham named *environmental power*, which is the energy required - as calculated in watts and joules - to create space through sound, light, electricity and moving images. Architecture, as expressed in its conventional understanding of space, was annihilated not only because the signs and symbols of the strip were proportionally bigger in size but also because an immense amount of energy activated the strip and forced a new reading of space: *space as information*. The following excerpt condenses Banham's view on the architecture of the environment:

*If Tom Wolfe's comparison between Las Vegas and the palace of Versailles shocks architectural opinion, it is less because it was meant to startle, than that it would never have occurred to any architectural critic (including the present author, I must admit) that the two entities were comparable... The difference of means is this: at Versailles, the enclosure of space by massive structure is paramount, and the idiom thus created sets the cues for the manipulation of space by other means, such as planting and water; whereas at Las Vegas -the super-hotels of The Strip, the casino-belt of Freemont Street- is pure environmental power, manifested as colored light. Whether or not one agrees that the use made of that power is as symbolically apt as the use made of structure at Versailles, the fact remains that the effectiveness with which space is defined is overwhelming, the creation of virtual volumes without apparent structure is endemic, the variety and ingenuity of lighting techniques is encyclopedic.*¹⁵ [Fig 2]

Banham's position dwelled on the generative potential of "calculus" rather than that of "pop," exempting him from Kenneth Frampton's classification of Venturi and Scott Brown as inheritors of the British picturesque tradition. In his article, "America 1960-1970. Notes on



Urban Images and Theory,” Frampton censured their essay “Learning from Pop,”¹⁶ where the authors suggest a far-reaching look into pop culture and its spin-off “formal vocabularies.”¹⁷ Venturi and Scott Brown claimed that their aim was far from “aestheticizing” the novel landscapes of pop profusion and closer to delving into the socio-cultural aspects underlying vernacular visual standards. Nonetheless, Frampton argued:

*The recent writings of Denise Scott-Brown and Robert Venturi extend the syncretic capacity of the English picturesque tradition... Their essentially picturesque prospect of Las Vegas relates however elliptically to the English ‘townscape’ position, first initiated in the Architectural Review in the late 40s as an integral part of that post-war Anglo-Saxon concern to ‘humanize’ the modern environment. This ‘humanization’ was a popular success and by the mid-50’s Townscape had been academicized into a Sittesque ‘method’ of urban design that was commonly accepted and practiced in the States.*¹⁸

Despite Denise Scott Brown’s fervent response to Frampton’s accusation,¹⁹ which pushed her socially oriented agenda to the extreme, and independent of whether one agrees entirely with Frampton, there is a certain truth to his argument. Naturally all ideas, manifestos and positions originate from somewhere; neither the propriety of Venturi and Scott-Brown’s discourse, nor the value –or its absence thereof – of their architectural approach is

Fig. 2 Banham used this photograph of Las Vegas in explanation of his ideas on environmental power
In Reyner Banham, *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, p. 269

Fig. 3 Cover of Architectural Design magazine, 1973

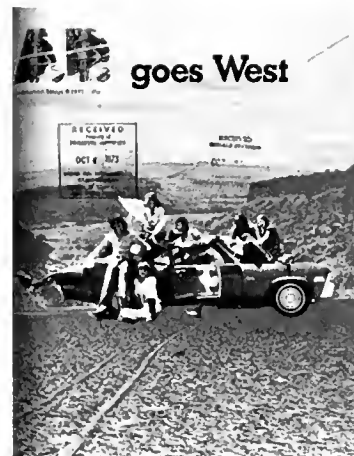




Fig. 6 Cover of the last issue of On Site magazine guest edited by James Wines. On Site, No. 5/6 (New York: Site, Inc., 1974)

under question here. What remains a fact however is that their ardent desire to analyze, explore and perhaps “humanize,” as Frampton puts it, the Las Vegas landscape, is the view of an *outsider*, an explorer who arrives in a site anew and attempts to comprehend it by naturalizing it.

At the same time that Banham was demanding Las Vegas be requisite travel for the education of the British architect,²⁰ the Architectural Association of London collaborated in 1973 with the Southern California School of Architecture to make a pilgrimage into the “western paradise of America”²¹ as a massive didactic endeavor. The journal of the students’ journey exclusively filled the “Cosmorama” section of *Architectural Design*’s September issue, specially dedicated to the vast land of the American West entitled “AD goes West.” [Fig. 3] This was a scandalous issue that included many naked female figures, labels inscribed “No boobies? Why not get nice big ones?” cars cruising in the desert, hospital receipts for body alterations, chocolate flavored water-beds and many other incomprehensible things, culturally shocking for the European injected into LA.²² The travelers’ reactions were variable, ranging from fascination and relish-

ment to loathing, though the vast majority of the witnesses were experiencing a compulsive need to indulge in the land’s fantasy and its cultural paraphernalia. Despite all resistances endowed in their European backgrounds, the generic propensity was to “hop on” the ersatz - along the lines of Denise Scott-Brown’s recommendation to “Hop on Pop” - like explorers tangling with the customs of their newly acquired land.

In the same spirit of territorial discovery, the polemicist of imagery - British architectural critic Martin Pawley - critiqued the books *Archigram* and *Learning from Las Vegas* simultaneously, as parallel adept explorations in ‘pop-imagery’ unworthy of serious discussion. In his uproarious review, Pawley satirically labeled the book *Archigram* as an arousing mission that could make breasts expand miraculously, while *Learning from Las Vegas* was a more solemn assignment of a woman that would have to lacquer her nipples.²³ He then added that both projects are “wonderful” and so the reader best flip through their pages during the Mary Tyler Moore Show for their marvel to be fully absorbed.

Approximately two decades after *Learning from Las Vegas* its authors attempted to rearticulate their motivations in the early 1970s. In their book *Architecture as Signs and Systems*, Venturi and Scott-Brown claim that their agenda in 1972 was grounded on an encrypted message: the triumph of *surface-pixelated* iconographies over scenographic iconographies and eventually of the *electronic* over the *iconic*,²⁵ a triumph which now clearly resonates with the pervasive usage of digital media in design. In other words, the authors retrospectively claim that *Learning from Las Vegas* was an anticipation of current developments and a forecast of an emerging energy landscape. Yet beyond such revisionist claims, one has to conjecture: what was the authors’ position when the world was suffering the debut of a notorious energy crisis in 1973? *Learning from Las Vegas* coincided with a major historic juncture that has since forced a sober interdisciplinary scrutiny for renewable energy sources. A stream of “green” preachers appeared in the design scene out of these critical circumstances seeking an ethics of design for the sake of energy conservation. Distinct from these moralists came a second stream of thinkers who wholeheartedly took on the challenge of an emerging non-corporeal spatiality defined by energy, electricity, light,

OLD monumentality

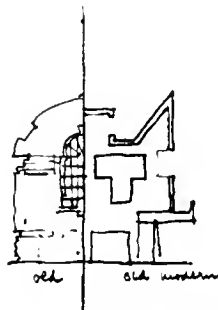
The nave

The big

- ① HIGH
- ② LIT and WINDOWED
- ③ OPEN
- ④ SPACE
- ⑤ UNCLUTTERED

for communal crowds

- ① High for monumentality
- ② Lit and windowed: natural & simulated daylight falls on walls to clarify the great architecture
- ③ Open: to let natural light in and lately to integrate the inside & outside
- ④ Space: spaciousness for communal crowds
- ⑤ Uncluttered: don't clutter up the great architecture



part of Topic 8 (Building types)

THE ROADSIDE INTERIOR

53. Architectural monumentality and the roadside interior

NEW monumentality

The chapels without the nave

The big

- ① LOW
- ② GLITTERING -in-the-DARK
- ③ ENCLOSED
- ④ MAZE of
- ⑤ ALCOVES and
- ⑥ FURNITURE

for separate people

- ① Low for economy of air conditioning
- ② Glittering-in-the-Dark: perimeters dark in value, absorbent in texture to obscure extent and character of the architectural enclosure. Glittering light sources - mainly ornamental - and recessed ceiling spots to light people and furniture and not architecture.
- ③ Enclosed to exclude the outside to engender a different style and role inside
- ④ Maze for crowds of anonymous individuals without direct connections with each other
- ⑤ Alcoves: people are together and yet separate
- ⑥ Furniture: objects and symbols dominate architecture

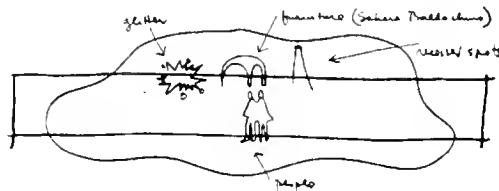


Fig. 5 Robert Venturi & Denise Scott Brown's "New Monumentality Manifesto"

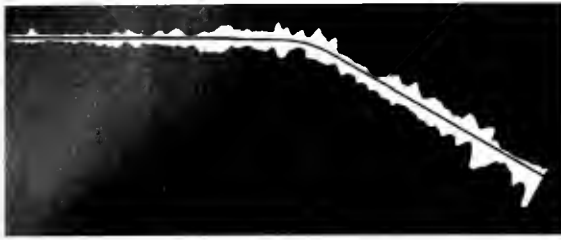


Fig. 4 Robert Venturi & Denise Scott-Brown's "illumination diagram" visualizing the way in which neon travels along the Las Vegas

temperature and water. At the time computing was not an established currency in design, however there was a shared disposition in the art world to give expression to a space of information, a space of flows: essentially, a dematerialized space, which could be calculated through numbers, rather than represented through geometry. It is curious then how aloof Venturi and Scott-Brown remained about taking any position on energy. This aloofness is especially surprising if one considers not only the theme under discussion - Las Vegas, a super power-plant devourer in the midst of the desert - but also their temperament for engaging in discussions tightly connected to energy. Parallel to Banham's assault upon the standards of cultural institutions and conventional disciplinary boundaries, Venturi and Scott-Brown argued for the need to expand the architectural discourse in order to comprehend the new landscape of Las Vegas. They argued that architecture, in all its structural appurtenances, did not accommodate the "anti-spatial"²⁶ milieu of the strip and the marvel of billboards' communicative effects. The writers also do not fail to enthusiastically acknowledge that the strip, empowered by voltage, is dependent primarily on watts.²⁷ [Fig. 4] In addition, they provocatively support "low spaces" in their "New Monumentality manifesto"²⁸ as dictated by air conditioning [Fig. 5]. This case is a precise example of an architecture entirely determined by energy, meaning the sustenance of a particular temperature flowing through space.

The power of voltage and mechanical servicing is partially conceded, but not taken further to discover the unique potential of a landscape like Las Vegas, which after all consumes extreme amounts of energy in the middle of "nowhere-land." Venturi and Scott Brown talk about gas stations and their decorated sheds, but not about the excessive underground oil flow; they talk about

the communicative effects of neon signs, but not about the energy consumed to sustain their wonder. They remain figurative and iconic in their analysis, attempting to represent the city's sparkling marvel abstractly, instead of speaking the marvel's own language, which is watts. Overall, they do not excavate into the subterranean network of services that makes this all possible and, extending this syllogism, the spaces that occur solely defined by energy.

Taking Venturi and Scott-Brown's analysis of Las Vegas from its inception, one has to acknowledge that in 1968 when they first conducted their design studio at Yale University and published "A Significance for A&P Parking Lots" in *Architectural Forum*, their concerns sprang from an entirely different perspective that had to do with the visual language of an unexplored and greatly misinterpreted American urban landscape. In the years to come though, the world of artists, environmentalists and architects from around the world were rigorously attending to energy as both an expressive means and a social concern. In this manner, Las Vegas was repositioned in spite of the Venturis' formal narration, at the forefront of an ongoing debate resulting from the notorious energy crisis of 1973. Venturi and Scott Brown's discourse almost naturally acquired an additional provocation unrelated to ducks. Nevertheless, independent of their controversial sympathy toward ducks, the writers eloquently resisted taking any stance on energy production and consumption, as if energy did not concern architecture. Seemingly aware of the implications of the energy crisis, Denise Scott Brown declared at the preface of the book's revised 1977 edition:

*"Since Learning from Las Vegas was written, the lights of Las Vegas have gone out for a spell and Americans' confidence in the automobile and other resources has been rocked in the first of possibly many crises. High-energy expenditure and urban wastefulness are not central to our arguments for symbolic architecture and receptivity to other peoples' values; I tried to show why in an interview in On Site on Energy."*²⁹

Considering this mysterious explanation in *On Site's* Energy issue - dedicated to the generative design potential of topics related to energy [Fig. 6] - Denise Scott Brown

claimed that energy was isolated from design concerns and if we were to assume the opposite, we would face an unreal problem with no pragmatic solutions. The periodical's editor, Alison Sky, conducting the interview, repeatedly pressed Scott Brown to take a position on Las Vegas in relation to the existing Energy Crisis. For Sky, this meant a stance either for it - affirming the potential of an emerging information landscape - or against it - rejecting energy waste and the depletion of natural resources.³⁰ Scott Brown's long-winded explanations were decisive; she responded to the issue as a courageous "avant-gardist" driven to problematize the ethical commandments of technicians-environmentalists. But even beyond that, she explicitly marked boundaries on how to read *Learning from Las Vegas*. There is a lucid contextual breakdown of what the book concerns and what it does not concern; of what it actually redefines and what it does not; of what the architect should open up to and what he/she should not. It seems that as time went by, the authors grew anxious about the relevance of their findings in regards to current events; their response was to stress firmly the rigor of their original, formal position, rather than go along with emerging social concerns, which, paradoxically, was their initial intention. The messages conveyed were quite didactic:

Message one: Do not stray from the instructions on what you should be paying attention to while reading this book; otherwise you will be missing the point.

Message two: *Learning from Las Vegas* is not open for any kind of discussion, just a very particular duck-related one.

In many ways, *Learning from Las Vegas* was a significant, polemic contribution for 1968, a time when diners and wedding chapels were considered "dirty" items for discussion in the realm of pedagogy. Nonetheless, the possibilities it unfolded could reach far beyond ornithological formal analyses, if only the authors would have let these other concerns accompany their decorated sheds. With the passage of time, Venturi and Scott Brown appeared astonishingly resistant to repositioning their core arguments in relation to contemporaneous developments and also bewildered by the accidental entanglement of their discourse in the widespread energy-related debates throughout the 1970s. In the end, *Learning from Las Vegas* was not about the expansion of architecture

itself, but about the particular topics under its scrutiny.

Many years later, Denise Scott Brown, in her 1995 article "Breaking Down the Barriers Between Theory and Practice,"³¹ proposed that the effective fusion of theory and practice comes naturally for the architect. Yet contradicting this she simultaneously wrote: "We architects absorb scholarly information and professionalize it to suit our own context of designing and doing."³² Perhaps one can view this statement as adequate explanation for the authors' silence throughout the late 1970s. As long as he/she can remember that ducks and decorated sheds, despite being a worthy decoy to provoke architectural conventions, did not adequately explain the wonder of Las Vegas' cityscape. Next to the Venturi and Scott-Brown, the contributions of Wolfe and Banham unveiled a mesh of energy-related issues, whose potential was neither taken to heart, nor exploited by architectural pedagogy. In many ways, injecting Las Vegas into architectural discourse was like opening "Pandora's box." Perhaps energy, as a generator of design creativity, has stayed in the box up to this day and has not been addressed as an issue inextricably linked with design, but is still seen only as a restrictive agent. Banham somehow escaped out of the box, along with the rest of the energy experimenters, who dove into a universe of calculations and programmable environments, forecasting the digital design praxis.

Notes

- ¹ Tom Wolfe's essay "Las Vegas (What?) Las Vegas (Can't Hear you! Too Noisy) Las Vegas!" is part of the book *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine Flake Streamline Baby*. See Tom Wolfe, *The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine Flake Streamline Baby* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965). The book was a collection of essays, some of which first appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune's* Sunday edition in 1964. It became a bestseller and established Wolfe as a leading figure in literary experiments of non-fiction that became known as 'New Journalism'. In parallel to the project of his book, Wolfe was working as a reporter for the New York *Herald-Tribune* and was, in addition, one of the two staff writers (Jimmy Breslin was the other) of New York magazine, which began as the *Herald-Tribune's* Sunday supplement. Wolfe's homonymous essay to his book first appeared in *Harper's Bazaar* in 1964. See <http://www.tomwolfe.com>
- ² Wolfe, "Las Vegas (What?)," 17-18
- ³ Visualization has not been established as a function that computers could perform until the late 1970s. Although the first ENIAC computers - electronic numerical integrator and computer - were constructed in the 1940s, they only involved digital electronics and programmability. Visualizing computed tasks came significantly later. In his article "Computing Without Computers", John Frazer recalls that in 1969 "the only screen graphics display device at Cambridge University was a circular cathode ray tube where the first lines fade before the last lines were drawn." See John Frazer, *Architectural Design*, Vol 75, No.2 (Marh-April 2005): 34-43
- ⁴ I am borrowing here Wolfe's expression. See Wolfe, "Las Vegas (What?)," 7
- ⁵ *Ibid*
- ⁶ Wolfe wrote of the signs along Route 91 in Las Vegas: "But such signs! They tower. They revolve they oscillate, they soar in shapes before which the existing vocabulary of art history is helpless." See Wolfe, "Las Vegas (What?)," 8
- ⁷ Tom Wolfe, "Electrographic Architecture", *Architectural Design*, Vol 39 (July 1969), 380
- ⁸ Wolfe, "Electrographic Architecture": 379-382.
- ⁹ "Tom Wolfe", "Cosmorama", *Architectural Design*, Vol 39 (July 1969), 346
- ¹⁰ Denise Scott Brown, in discussion with Beatriz Colomina and architecture PhD students at Princeton University, February 16th 2006, Princeton, NJ
- ¹¹ Reyner Banham, "Towards a million-volt light and sound culture," *Architectural Review*, Vol 141 (May 1967): 331-335
- ¹² Reyner Banham, *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969)
- ¹³ Although Banham has been censured as an uncritical technophile, in the introduction of *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, he fervently attempted to distinguish from the start, his own approach from Sigfried Giedion's in *Mechanization Takes Command* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948). In contradistinction to Giedion's apotheosis of technical innovations, Banham's intention was to redefine and expand the discipline of architecture, rather than provide a thorough historical study in building technology. On this point, he writes: "Awe by the immense reputation of its author, the world of architecture received *Mechanization Takes Command* as an authoritative and conclusive statement, not as a tentative beginning on a field of study that opened almost infinite possibilities for further research. In the ensuing twenty-odd years since its publication, it has been neither glossed, criticized, annotated, extended nor demolished. 'Giedion', one is told 'hasn't left much to be said. This present book represents a tiny fraction of what Giedion left unsaid." See Banham, *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, 15
- ¹⁴ Banham even brings up Paul Valéry's comparison between Eupalinos, the architect and Tridon the shipwright, in order to support his view that it is in the nature of architects to seek solutions that can be philosophically grounded. Citing Banham: "For a demonstration of this difference one can profitably revive Paul Valéry's contrast between Eupalinos, the architect (from his Platonic dialogue of the same name) and Tridon the shipwright. The former was preoccupied with the right method of doing the allotted tasks, and deploying the accepted method, of his calling, and seemed to find a philosophical problem in every practical decision. Tridon, on the other hand, applied every technology that came conveniently to hand, whether or not it was part of the shipbuilding tradition, and treated the sayings of philosophers as further instruction on the direct solution of practical problems." See Banham, *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, 266
- ¹⁵ Banham, *The Architecture of the Well-Tempered Environment*, 268-270
- ¹⁶ Kenneth Frampton, "America 1960-1970: Notes on Urban Images and Theory, Casabella, Vol 35, No 359-360, (December 1971): 24-38
- ¹⁷ Scott Brown, "Learning from Pop", *Casabella*, Vol 35, No 359-360 (December 1971): 14-23
- ¹⁸ Frampton, "America 1960-1970", 25
- ¹⁹ Scott Brown, "Reply to Frampton", *Casabella*, Vol 35, No 359-360 (December 1971).
- ²⁰ Banham, "Towards a million-volt light and sound culture," 332
- ²¹ See 'Cosmorama', *Architectural Design*, Vol 43, (September 1973), 552.
- ²² 'Cosmorama' section of *Architectural Design*, Vol 43, No.9 (September 1973), 552.
- ²³ I am borrowing here Denise Scott Brown's phrase, "Hop on Pop". See Scott Brown, "Learning from Pop", 14
- ²⁴ Martin Pawley, "Miraculous Expanding Tits versus Lacquered Nipples" in *Architectural Design*, Vol 43, No.2 (February 1973), 80
- ²⁵ Robert Venturi & Denise Scott Brown, *Architecture as Signs and Systems* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004): 8-9
- ²⁶ Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas*, 8
- ²⁷ *Ibid*, 19
- ²⁸ *Ibid*, 55
- ²⁹ Denise Scott Brown, "Preface to the Revised Edition," in Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1977)
- ³⁰ Alison Sky, "Interview with Denise Scott-Brown", *On Site On Energy*, No.5/6 (New York: Site Inc, 1974): 100-108
- ³¹ Denise Scott-Brown, "Breaking down the Barriers Between Theory and Practice," *Architecture*, Vol 84, No 3 (March 1995): 43-47
- ³² Scott-Brown, "Breaking down the Barriers Between Theory and Practice," 43

From Exclusion to Incorporation: Formalism's New Limits

Nana Last

At first glance, the work of the contemporary artist Inigo Manglano-Ovalle suggests a strong formalist undercurrent. The sheer formal presence of his large sculptural installations such as "Cloud"(2003) and "Iceberg"(2005) [Fig. 1, Fig.2] or the similar painterly qualities of his "Garden of Delights"(1998) easily allow formalist readings. Yet, suggestive as they are, rather than bear witness to the Greenbergian formalism that dominated the art world during the middle to late decades of the twentieth century, they point to the current re-emergence of formalism in complex strategies of aesthetic incorporation. Examining Manglano-Ovalle's work thus offers as much an understanding of his oeuvre as it does insights into developments in formalism over the past four decades. Interestingly, the history of formalist development leading to Manglano-Ovalle's work has its origins, not in formalism's reign in the art world, but advances from the moment of its imminent demise in the mid-1960's. Ushering in that demise was the emergence within the visual arts of conceptual art practices that renewed the emphasis on that which was considered the opposite of form - concept and content.

Greenbergian formalism, which is most associated with the art of abstract expressionism, is an essentialist form of criticism whose fundamental tenet requires strict disciplinary separation between the various forms of visual art and between art and all that was not art. The specific medium - painting, drawing, sculpture - of the artwork formed the basis of these distinctions. As such, a given work was to be evaluated by its ability to present the essence of that particular medium. Painting was, for example, to emphasize such inherent qualities as flatness, the surface of the canvas, the qualities of the paint, and the painting's vertical relation to the wall and viewer. Similarly, sculpture was concerned with three dimensionality, horizontality, the specifics of its materials and its association to the ground. As a result of this approach, specific content- especially linguistic based content deemed immaterial and non-visual - was repressed to form. Conceptual and



Fig. 1 and 2 Inigo Manglano Ovalle, *Iceberg (r11ic1)*, 2004. Courtesy of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery, New York

post-conceptual work developed models of production and meaning that rethought the form-content relationship in a variety of ways. While some early models of conceptualism produced art works that opposed content to form, others moved on to develop more complex modes of operation and interaction between form and content, ranging from appropriation of other mediums to the incorporation of formalism found in the work of Mangano-Ovalle.

Opposition

One of conceptual art's initial strategies involved opposing concept - typically in the form of language - to physical or visual form. This emphasis on language reversed formalism's expulsion of language from the visual field. The linguistic emphasis denied a fundamental split between the visual and the verbal that ultimately challenged visual form's privileged position as the unquestioned essence of the visual arts. Nowhere was this more clearly stated than in the first *Art-Language* publication (1969), a journal of and by conceptual artists. In the opening editorial, Terry Atkinson pondered what happens if: "this editorial, in itself an attempt to evince some outlines as to what 'conceptual art' is, is held out as a 'conceptual art' work." He concluded that: "Initially what conceptual art seems to be doing is questioning the condition that seems to rigidly govern the

form of visual art - that visual art remains visual." Seizing on this potential, conceptual artists unleashed the limits placed on the visual arts under Greenbergian formalism to destabilize categorical distinctions and produce new models of production that redefined form-content relations. This rethinking of formalism's imposed boundaries broached the crucial question of how the visual arts are defined, evaluated and operate in the world and by whom those designations are made. In querying not just the tenets of formalism, but its meta-construction, these questions acted to reveal what formalism most aggressively suppressed, its own contingent origins. That is, while formalism offered its categories as essential and its operating tenets necessarily derived from the formal, visual and physical properties of a given medium, conceptualism, in revealing the constructed nature of formalism's designations, revealed formalism's contingent bases. What this suggests is that formalism does not solely follow from its medium specificity, but involves a wider set of epistemological associations and operations. Understanding formalism therefore involves considering what models of meaning and operation it adheres to.

Formalism adhered to an epistemology that demands and attempts to furnish clear distinctions, including those between disciplines, mediums, attributes and functions. In response conceptualism, developed by proposing alternative bases of meaning that reject both the suppression of specific content and the positivist demand for sharp demarcations of categories. As a result conceptual practices instituted singularly and in combination everything from language (ranging from instructions for the production of "art works" to the defining of philosophical concepts) to dirt, scattered felt, mirrors, time and air in lieu of traditional forms and mediums. Although outwardly rejecting the formalist precept that form and content were inseparable and that visual and formal ordering were definitive of the art work, a number of conceptual art's responses themselves paradoxically followed formalist positivist epistemology. That is, they accepted that formalism was solely delineated by medium-specificity rather than entailing the construction of a model of operation towards the production of form. As such, a number of early canonical examples of conceptual art functioned primarily by opposing "idea" or "concept" to form. A prime example of this is found in the conceptual artist Joseph Kosuth's well known essay,



"Art after Philosophy". In the essay, Kosuth stresses that conceptual art is an inquiry into the concept of art itself, an inquiry that challenges and redefines what art is. But as Kosuth finds it impossible to simultaneously remain within conventionalized and legitimized aesthetic categories of painting and sculpture and question what art is, that inquiry can only occur through conceptual practices that directly oppose the formalist schema. As such, much of Kosuth's art involved the substitution of words (frequently definitions) for physical or visual presence, as with his "One and Three Chairs" (1965) [Fig.3] that offers a chair in three forms- physical object, photographic representation and linguistic definition- all presented as equivalent.

To be successful, however, conceptual art's incorporation of language fully into the visual arts needed to do more than breakdown the traditional formalist categorizations within the arts, but - more importantly - it had to challenge the operations and bases of evaluation whereby such categories were formulated and instituted. And that

is where problems with Kosuth's oppositional approach arise. For Kosuth, art's function is the purely tautological one of self-definition, arising from the prioritizing of the conceptual content of the art over its form. In order to substantiate this approach, Kosuth turned to a model of meaning provided by the analytic philosophy of British philosopher A. F. Ayer and, particularly to Ayer's analysis of Kant's distinction between analytic and synthetic propositions. Ayer claimed synthetic propositions are those that refer to and rely on the empirical/external world for verification, while analytic propositions are understood to be propositions that do not depend upon the outside world for verification, but are self-confirming or tautological. Kosuth seized on Ayer's description of analytic propositions to declare that: "Works of art are analytical propositions." which "as art . . . provide no information what-so-ever about any matter of fact." But this is exactly the positivist/verificationist epistemology behind formalism that strictly separates visual mediums and art from all that is not art. Thus, while clearly an



Fig. 3 Joseph Kosuth, *One and Three Chairs*, 1965
Digital Image @ The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed
by SCALA/Art Resource, NY

attempt to break with Greenbergian formalism, Kosuth, in effect, merely replaced "form" with "idea" without altering its model of meaning or operation. His approach thus supports the formalist, internal or autonomous, model that collapses the meaning, production and evaluation of art into one set of pre-determined criteria.

Appropriation

Although problematic, the oppositional model of early conceptualism succeeded in revealing formalism's inability to theorize or substantiate its own boundaries, despite being crucial to its operative tenets. Formalist logic had required sharp limitations on work based on exclusion of properties or attributes. These exclusions function to preclude the medium's contamination while fulfilling its essence. Such an exclusionary process or trajectory requires successive rejections of more and more elements declared non-essential, leading to the expulsion from the visual field of all that is declared supplemental to the visual arts: language, representation, spatiality and the social/political. According to the art critic Craig Owens - following Jacques Derrida - the logic of the supplement that undermines much of traditional aesthetic theory marks just that limit between the intrinsic and the extrinsic. Not surprisingly, Derrida cites Immanuel Kant's not discussing the frame in painting as a rejection of that which is deemed as supplemental. As the (literal) frame in art is neither fully outside of the work, nor fully within it, the frame points to the indeterminate and contingent limit of art works. In contrast, the ability to incorporate and interrogate the basis of production from within a practice allows for the development of relations between form and content, art and the world, that are not simply oppositional.

Beyond the initial break with the formalist prohibition on language in the visual arts, conceptualism's incorporation of language fully into the core of visual art, brought with it the concomitant opportunity to incorporate not just language as a formal component, but linguistic based content from other disciplines. With the inclusion of the linguistic component thus came content, operations, and constructs from "outside" disciplines including: linguistics, philosophy, psychoanalysis, and architecture. These incorporations challenged and interrogated the formalist unity - even tautology - of precept, output and evaluation. These incorporations also challenged the role, even neces-

sity, of aspects previously believed to be essential to the various visual arts; the cumulative effect of which was to make central the fundamental question of what is external and what is internal to art - and how and by whom that is determined.

Another model for the incorporation of the linguistic into visual arts by a conceptual artist is found in the work of Mel Bochner. In a 1970 work Bochner was able to simultaneously utilize operative aspects of formalism and reject formalism's expulsion of language from the visual field. With its dripping painted words, Bochner's painted proclamation: "Language is not transparent" was able to at once employ and reject formalist thinking. The painting did this by emphasizing the formal properties of the medium (with the paint drips), reject the formalist denial of language (by painting words) and deny the concomitant positivist demand that meaning be transparent (by declaring otherwise). This complex act allowed the artwork to appropriate formalist use of the medium, refer to formalist limits and redress the formalist expulsion of language from the visual field. The painting achieved this both formally and conceptually by turning the medium of painting on itself around the construct of transparency. The non-transparency of the medium is thus used to support the understanding of language as such, an understanding that rejects the logical positivist goal of detailing a completely clarified - or transparent - form of expression.

The redevelopment of form-content relations was furthered by other strategies of artistic appropriation that were less involved with language and linguistic content, but focused on the operations and functions of artworks. A prime example is the work of the contemporary Los Angeles based artist Jorge Pardo. Pardo's work functions by aspiring to a complete appropriation or occupation of the typical territory of architecture: notably its image, form and functioning. Such blurring of distinctions was forbidden under formalism. Examples of Pardo's work include a house commissioned by LA MOCA (1996) [Fig.4] and what amounts to a renovation of the ground floor space of the Dia Center for the Arts in NY. These artworks operate through the appropriation of the paradigm of architecture as functional and art as not. Presenting artworks in this manner leaves the typically definitive question of function largely open to context. The work's

content then comes to be derived from the continual oscillation across the art/architecture boundary as it is typically constructed. This makes the issue of utility palpable while leaving its actual operation latent. Caught between these two poles, the question of function, in and of itself, becomes the work's foremost content. Pardo's work in its complete appropriation of architectural form and practices thus sets the possibility that the collapse of the boundary between art and architecture is not just a formal one, but can be used to open up the discourse around the work. This allows the discourse to engage the conceptual content of the work- as with Pardo's concern with the social status of function. However, Pardo's works still rely heavily on traditional architectural forms, of resemblance on the one hand (which problematically can mask underlying operations) and the traditional boundary dividing architecture from art, useful from not, on the other. The effect of this is to inadvertently perpetuate the formalist division between media.

Incorporation

Moving beyond the model of direct appropriation, the Chicago based contemporary artist Inigo Manglano-Ovalle's work has, over the past decade, become known for its multi-disciplinary collaborations with architects, geneticists, biotech researchers, medical ethicists, historians and others. These collaborations broach formal, conceptual and operative distinctions. Manglano-Ovalle is also known for his use of a wide range of media, includ-

ing photography, video and sculpture of various sorts. Employing this range of concepts and media his work has developed several main currents. Initially Manglano-Ovalle's work focused on more 'cultural' processes such as the social forces of architecture and modernism arising from the negotiation of political borders, social injustice and the construction of collective spaces. An example is Manglano-Ovalle's incorporation, into three video projects, the all glass houses of the modernist architect, Mies Van der Rohe in order to contrast modernity's social separation with its visual access. A second set of Manglano-Ovalle's projects utilize natural processes of growth such as DNA, climate and ecological formations found in sperm, clouds or icebergs associated with social issues of identity, familial relations and social divisions. These projects consider relations between socio-political, biological, and ethical constructs arising from issues such as immigration, landscape, violence and genetic research. Examples include an enormous Cloud made out of black fiberglass covered with titanium that is meant to capture a force of nature and a two story high structural model of an iceberg formation. These projects echo current trends of architectural research and practice that look to models of biological or natural growth and topological constructs. This overlap makes Manglano-Ovalle's work akin to recent architecture practices, including the work of Greg Lynn, known for its use of biological models or O.C.E.A.N. North [Fig. 5 and 6], dECOi, and numerous others that adopt dynamic models of natural growth as the basis of research and design.

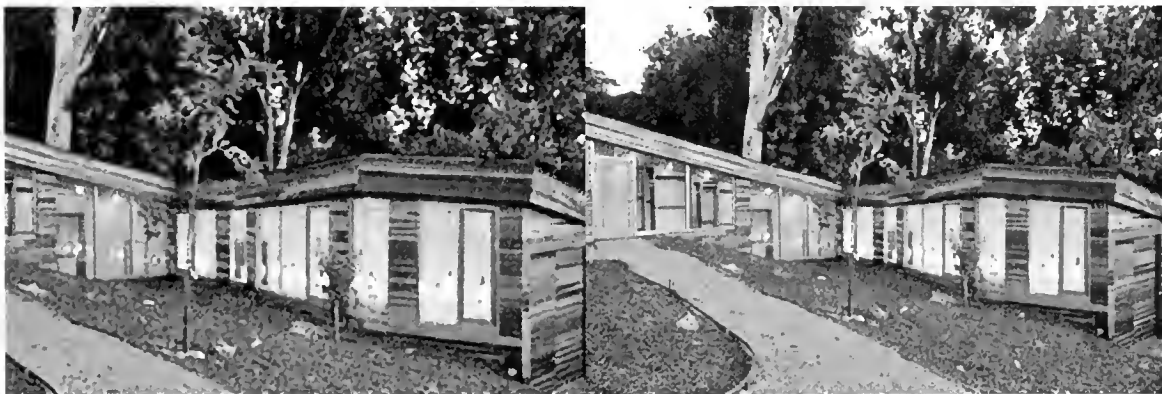
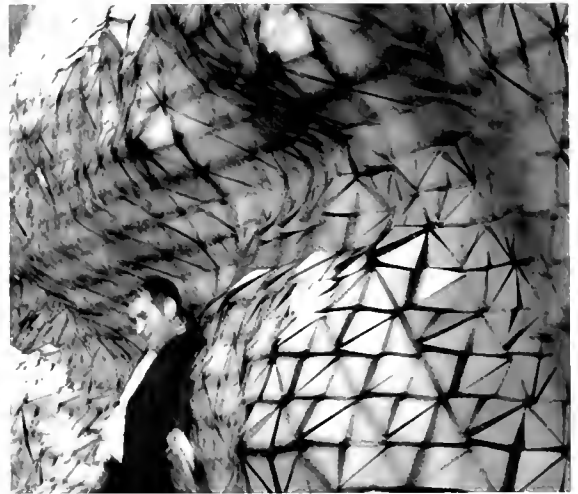


Fig 4 Jorge Pardo, 1998, *4160 Seaview Lane* Courtesy of Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York



Fig. 5 Ocean North, 2004, Jyväskylä Music and Arts Center Phase 2. Courtesy of Ocean North
 Fig. 6 dECOi, 2003, Hyposurface. Courtesy of Mark Burry for dECOi



What makes Manglano-Ovalle's work of particular interest, however, is its ability to incorporate into a given work, not just various mediums, but constructs and modes of operation, including formalist ones. While formalism had clearly laid out the problems and goals of each medium, interdisciplinary practices such as Manglano-Ovalle's are capable of exposing, by interweaving more explicitly complex material, the frequently repressed contexts and inner workings of the issues and problems themselves. While the stance of formalism as well as autonomy demand a clearly defined territory in which to operate, the focus is necessarily placed on what is 'internal' to a self-defining disciplinarity. In contrast, post-conceptual (i.e. practices following from conceptualism) interdisciplinary operations are based on logics of inclusion rather than formalism's logic of exclusion. Manglano-Ovalle's frequent employment of complex formal structures and constellations in installations thus bears witness to this rethinking of the form-content relation that allows form no longer to arise largely from the strict separation of media but instead to re-emerge from a newly porous set of boundaries. Such boundaries are, as Manglano-Ovalle's interest in the complex understandings and workings of climate expresses, at times immaterial, yet always palpable. Manglano-Ovalle's work is thus able to integrate and interrogate relations between

form and content without either leaving them in tact or simply declaring them abolished. Form becomes neither fully appropriated not simply opposed to content. This suggests that rather than disappear, formal distinctions may remain (as those between painting and sculpture) but are no longer the locus of meaning nor the driving (teleological) force of productive practice, nor even of form itself. This ready incorporation of and encroachment into other territories and practices, forms and contents has the potential to go beyond questioning what is external or internal to art. Instead it is able to incorporate that discussion - with its political and ideological issues - into practice. For Manglano-Ovalle this means allowing for the simultaneous understanding of climate - sometimes as cloud, sometimes as modernist architecture- as both natural and social, thereby successfully transforming formal constructs into operative ones.

L' Uomo Delinquente: Patterns of Criminality and the Architecture of the Cell

Olga Touloumi

In 1885, the *Palazzo delle Esposizioni* in Rome hosted the 3rd International Penitentiary Congress and the 1st International Congress on Criminal Anthropology simultaneously.¹ At the Penitentiary Congress, prison labor products, confinement mechanisms, and life-size models of prison cells reflected a fixation with the standardization of prison architecture and cell typology while, at the second Congress, the emerging discipline of criminal anthropology was exhibiting its research on manifestations of delinquency and criminal typology with death masks, replicas of appendages, and detailed anatomical drawings of prisoners' skulls and bodies. In response to the Italian Interior Minister's request that the study of penitentiary reform occur within the prison,² both criminal anthropology and prison architecture attempted to present their respective subject matters as being in pursuit of a type, a pattern.

Situated between the panopticon model of the early Enlightenment period and the wing-organized prison of the 20th century, prison architecture of this period mainly privileged a radial configuration. With the cells developing linearly along corridors and not circumferentially around a tower, life inside the cells ceased to be subject to a centralized gaze, or to its absence – to put it in Foucaultian terms. Instead cell typology came to the forefront of prison architecture. Set within the con-

text of post-*Risorgimento* Italy and its identity politics,³ the two exhibitions reflected parallel efforts to define and standardize both the space and its occupant via formal analysis.

The chronicle of this dialogue between discourses on criminality, form, behavior, and architecture, all began with a laboratory discovery of a *fossetta*, a small morphological deviation of the skull.⁴ [Fig. 1] While director of the Pesaro asylum, Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), performed an autopsy on the skull of Italian brigand-Giuseppe Vilella. During the procedure, he was astonished to discover a small dimple on the back of the skull, with a part of the spinal column below it.

*I seemed to see all at once, standing out clearly illumined as in a vast plain under a flaming sky, the problem of the nature of the criminal, who reproduces in civilized times characteristics, not only of primitive savages, but of still lower types as far back as the carnivores.*⁵

The story of Vilella's autopsy and Lombroso's discovery would have remained only another Eureka! anecdote in the history of science had it not coincided with the unification of Italy. The Italian state was unifying the dispersed body of penitentiary institutions into one institution under the auspices of the central authority of the

state. A basic intention of the state was to codify what constituted an Italian- from amongst its diverse regional populations- and so it called upon the sciences to participate in this attempt to formalize a type- the Italian citizen- through the support of scientific methods that classified race and class.

The *fossetta* "discovery" provided the necessary pre-text for the inauguration of the discipline of criminal anthropology and further research on criminal types, with the support of the Italian penal system. In reality, the research had already been launched while Lombroso served as physician in the Calabrian military from 1859 to 1863.⁶ After graduating from the School of Medical Studies in the University of Padua, he joined the *Risorgimento* forces and was transferred to Calabria, where he documented the tattoos covering soldiers' bodies. Lombroso saw characteristics such as color, shape, complexity and position of tattoo as indicative of a decipherable formal lexicon of delinquency. The more elaborate the form, the more dangerous the owner; the more physically sensitive

the area of the tattoo, the more violent the individual. According to him, the tattoo's "complexity, multiplicity, and its situation upon the most sensitive portions of the body, where even savages avoid placing it, [shows] the greatest insensibility on the part of the criminals."⁷ The arms, upper body, legs, and head of each soldier were graphically depicted and arrayed on drawing plates providing a comprehensive survey of the tattooed body as well as of isolated tattoos [Fig.2]. Later incorporated into the fifth volume of his treatise on the delinquent man, the *Atlante*,⁸ this method of documentation set the initial framework for the connection drawn between behavioral and morphological patterns.

Moving from the military establishments in Calabria to the Pesaro Asylum and the University of Turin,⁹ Lombroso isolated formal analysis as a fundamental analytic tool for his research. In addition to studying the delinquent body, he initiated research comparing the artifacts produced by the prisoners with the morphology of their bodies. His archives now included graffiti, petit sculptures, samples of hand-writing and "pictografia," all illustrating "the peculiar and atavistic tendency to express the thoughts ... that preoccupy him [the criminal] with figures."¹⁰ He also compared criminal skull diameter, nasal shape, and asymmetries between the left and right sides of the body, with their relationship to the particular kind of criminal activity the individual was engaging in. This data was then organized into extensive catalogs relating certain morphologies to specific types of delinquency. Almost any indications of asymmetry, complexity, or morphological irregularity on the criminal's body or art product became interpreted as indicative of a criminal pattern.

*Thieves especially are apt to have submicrocephaly more frequently than normal beings, but less often than insane, while swindlers, bandits, and assassins are apt to have a head of exaggerated size, similar to that of the racial type, but larger. Congenital criminals present frequent cranial and facial asymmetry; this is especially the case with ravishers and thieves, and yet less in them than in the insane, although they exhibit more traumatic lesions of the head, and greater obliquity of the eyes. There are several differential points in the various classes of criminals.*¹¹

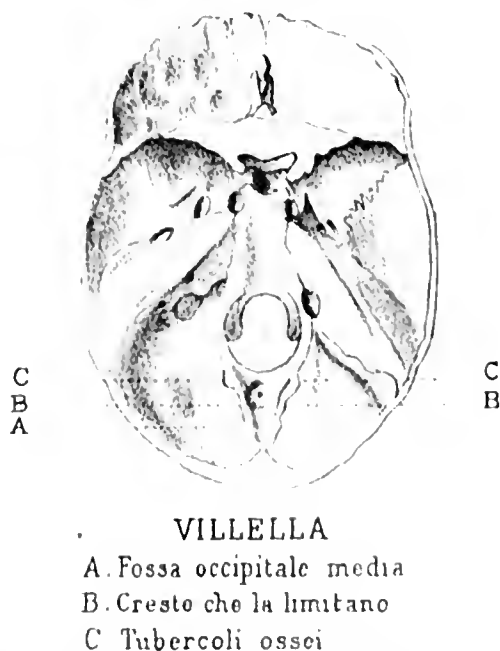


Fig. 1. Plan of Villella's skull indicating the area around the "fossetta": a. Medial occipital fossa (fossetta), b. Crests limiting it (the fossa), c. Tubercle bones. Ottolenghi Salvatore. *Treatato di polizia scientifica*. Milano: Società editrice libraria, 1910-1932.

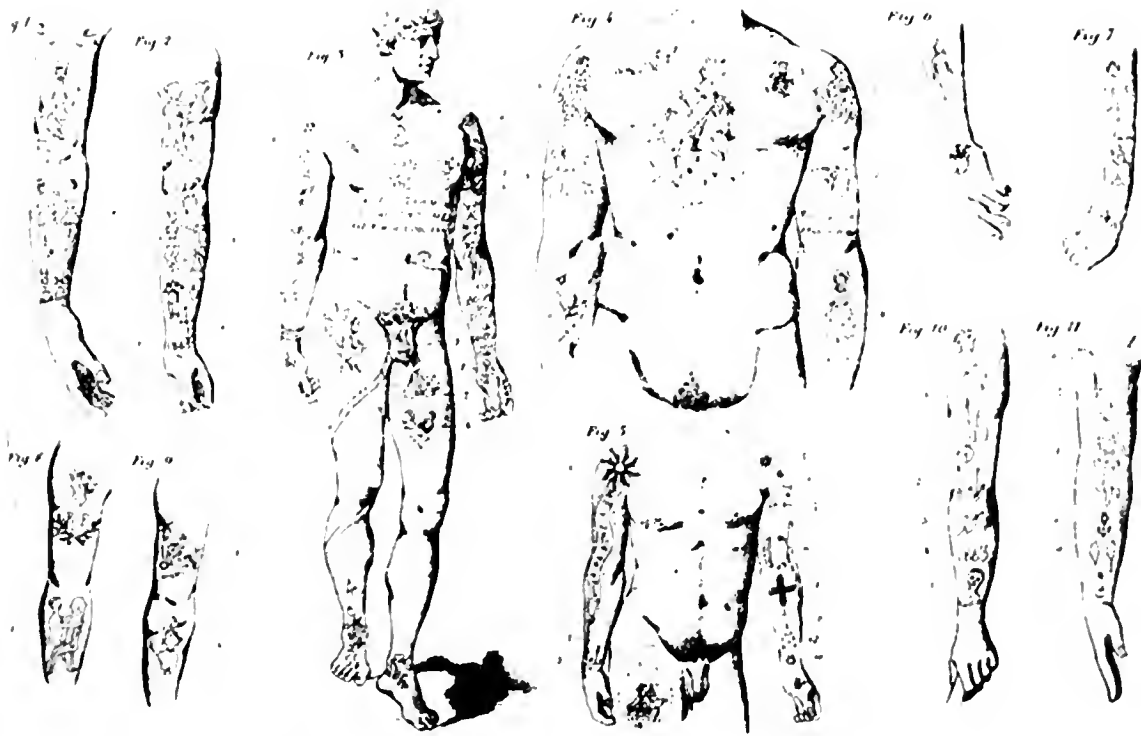


Fig. 2. Sketches of tattoos on the 5th volume of 'L' Uomo Delinquente' Lombroso, Cesare. *L' Uomo Delinquente in Rapporto all' Antropologia, Giurisprudenza e alla Discipline Carcerarie*. Torino: Fratelli Bocca, 1878.

Driven by the fantasy of the asymmetrical, ornamented, outré body of the criminal, juxtaposed against the ideal of the symmetrical, unornamented, Italian body, and the desire to codify the former, the Lombroso team came up with, not one, but multiple variations on a generic criminal type, unintentionally proving the work of criminal typology to be an almost impossible task.

The discourse on prison architecture was also departing from the pursuit of the ideal building type and focusing instead on the unit that contained the criminal: the cell. At the 3rd International Penitentiary Congress, the interest in cell standardization took the form of an exhibition organized in three parts: the first showing models of cell types in use at the most outstanding penitentiaries of each participating country [Figs. 3, 4],¹² the second displaying confinement equipment and construction details of each respective cell type, and the third exhibiting prison labor products [Fig. 5].¹³ The tripartite exhibition celebrated cell typology as the absolute manifestation of utilitarianism, resolving at once three issues: the need for prisons with a maximum

cell capacity at low construction cost; the call for perfected state control apparatus applied uniformly on the delinquent population; and the profitable operation of the institution through prison labor. Within the general euphoric atmosphere, the *Illustrazione Italiana* went so far as to attribute to the cell the characteristics of an



Fig. 3. Engraving showing the hall hosting part of the foreign participation to the prison labor products exhibition. *L' Illustrazione Italiana*. Milano: Editore Garzanti, 1885.

ideal housing unit. One anonymous writer exclaimed that "few of us have rooms so elegant in our houses." Each cell was reproduced full-size with the exact construction materials and dimensions, "with real doors, real bolts and the whole arrangement of a real peni-

cell that was soon to contain it.

Published in the proceedings of the congress, the accompanying construction documents outlined architectural guidelines for cell typology built around the desire for the modularization of the criminal. Each cell was presented in the proceedings through four plates: a first and second plate with a detailed plan, two cross sections and two longitudinal sections, a third plate with construction details, and a fourth one with a perspectival view of the cell from outside in. The drawings were detailed to the point of providing information on what type of labor the cell was designed to accommodate. With cabinets fully equipped with eating utensils, sheets of paper on the desk ready to be used, and bed sheets straightened up, the cell was structured around a very particular future user, who, however, was conspicuously absent from every single illustration of the cell.

The state's desire for a close collaboration between prison architecture and criminal anthropology, reflected in the dual exhibitions in Rome, was finally realized with the transfer, in 1903, of the School of Scientific Police to inside the Regina Coeli prison.¹⁶ Originally inaugurated in 1897 by Lombroso's student Salvatore Ottolenghi, the school was responding to the emerging problem of "public security." Since adjusting the penal system to the findings of criminal anthropology proved to be a slow process, and the penal system was failing to limit criminal activities, Ottolenghi¹⁷ proposed educating the police in reading signs of delinquency through Lombrosian formal analysis.

Regina Coeli was the main portal to the Italian penitentiary system, it hosted defendants before their trials and prisoners serving the final part of their sentence or awaiting transfer between institutions. As such, the prison provided the perfect framework for both research and pedagogy as it provided a "wealth of material which [could] be used for school purposes."¹⁸ Within the framework of its new program as a penitentiary, a research center, and a school, the front wing of Regina Coeli was transformed into the main research and education facility, and the cells functioned as controlled environments for studying individual behavioral patterns. Upon entry, microbiological, psychological, and photographic laboratories, as well as identification and fingerprint services were used to study the delinquent and his body.¹⁹

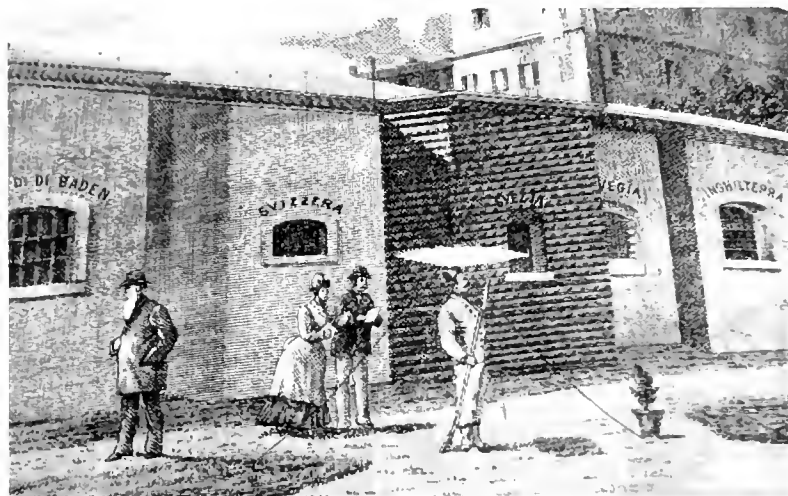


Fig. 4 Exterior view of the main ad hoc construction of the cell exhibition. *L'Illustrazione Italiana*, Milano: Editore Garzanti, 1885

tentary," that even included replicas of the prisoners and guards.¹⁵

This transformation of the cell into a module upon which prisons would be designed around required the parallel standardization of the criminal body. The response prison architecture was looking for did not come from the Italian school and Lombroso, but from the French school of criminology and, in particular, Alphonse Bertillon. Within the context of the dual congresses on penal reform and criminal anthropology, Bertillon demonstrated his ten-step measurement method for the documentation of the delinquent man. The criminal body was measured sitting, standing, with the hands extending, providing the positivist school of criminal anthropology with a standardized measurement method. Even though the system was premised upon the belief that the totality of the measurements could only belong to one individual, and hence contradicted Lombroso's hypothesis of the existence of generic criminal types, it triggered prison architecture's fascination with an imagined geometrized subject which shaped the

In order to systematize the varied data, Ottolenghi introduced the "cartellino segnaletico," an identification card with a standardized format, that was filed in the prison's archives.

Returning back to the two exhibitions, and within the context of a post-*Risorgimento* Italy in pursuit of identity, one could attribute to criminal anthropology the aspiration to define a generic criminal type, and to prison architecture the aspiration to reform him. However, prison architecture, in its attempts to standardize the cell with specific heights, location of windows, doors and grill types, succeeded in inventing the *Uomo Delinquente* which the positivist school failed to capture among its abundant replicas of ears and noses, death masks, survey drawings, anatomical sketches of skulls, photographs and statistical tables. Definitively describing the criminal type proved to be an almost impossible objective for criminology, yet the only possible working hypothesis for a standardized and standardizing architecture.

Notes

¹ "Corriere di Roma," *L' Illustrazione Italiana*, Novembre 17, 1885

² *Actes du Congrès Penitentiaire International de Rome*, publiés par les soins du comité exécutif, vol. 1 (Rome: Impr. des "Mantellate," 1887-88): 52

³ Referred to as the *Risorgimento*, the unification of Italy was the political and social process to gradually unite the diverse countries of the peninsula into a single nation. Historians tend to use the term for the period starting with the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and spanning throughout the 19th century. In my paper I term the period following the inauguration of the Kingdom of Italy "post-*Risorgimento*."

⁴ The term was used by Cesare Lombroso to describe an occipital fossa. See: Lombroso, Cesare. *L'uomo delinquente in rapporto all'antropologia, giurisprudenza e alle discipline carcerarie* (Torino: Fratelli Bocca, 1878 [2nd ed.]), p. 6.

⁵ Quoted in Gibson, Mary. "Cesare Lombroso and Italian Criminology: Theory and Politics," in *Criminals and Their Scientists*, edited by Peter Becker and Richard Wetzell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 139.

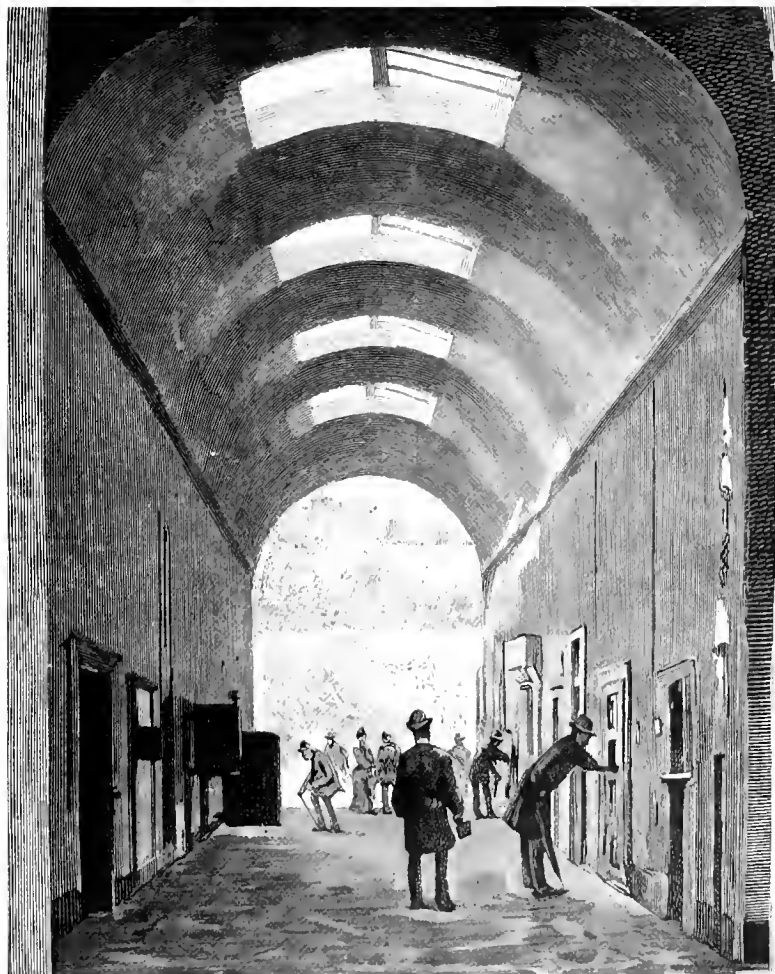
⁶ Wolfgang, Marvin. "Cesare Lombroso." In *Pioneers in Criminology*, Edited and introduced by Hermann Mannheim (Montclair, N.J. Patterson Smith, 1972 [2nd ed.]), p. 170.

⁷ Lombroso, Cesare. *The Criminal Anthropological Writings of Cesare Lombroso Published in the English Language Periodical Literature during the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries*. Ed. Horton, David and Katherine Rich (Ontario: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004), p. 128.

⁸ *Atlante* is the 5th volume of the second edition of *L' Uomo Delinquente*. It consists of plates with drawings surveying the different tattoos, forms of skulls, types of scars, and bodies in general, that Lombroso had carefully collected throughout his career. See: Lombroso, Cesare. *L'uomo delinquente in rapporto all'antropologia, giurisprudenza e alle discipline carcerarie. Aggiuntavi La teoria della tutela penale, del Prof. avv. F. Poletti* [2 ed.] Torino: Fratelli Bocca, 1878.

⁹ Lombroso was transferred in 1872 from Calabria to the University of Torino and conducted research at the Pesaro Asylum. See: Wolfgang, Marvin. "Cesare Lombroso," in *Pioneers in Criminology*, edited and introduced by Hermann

Fig. 5 Engraving showing the interior of the main corridor. *L' Illustrazione Italiana*. Milano: Editore Garzanti, 1885



Mannheim (Montclair, N.J. Patterson Smith, 1972 [2nd ed.]), pp. 170-171.

¹⁰ Lombroso, Cesare. *Palinsesti del Carcere. Storie, Messaggi, Iscrizioni, Graffiti dei Detenuti delle Carceri alla Fine dell' Ottocento* (Firenze: Ponte alla Grazie, 1996), p. 81.

¹¹ Lombroso, *The Criminal Anthropological Writings of Cesare Lombroso*, pp. 119-120.

¹² *Actes du Congrès*, 13. "Il Congresso Penitenziario Internazionale e la Sua Esposizione," *L' Illustrazione Italiana*, Novembre 17, 1885.

¹³ *Actes du Congrès*, 13.

¹⁴ *L' Illustrazione Italiana*.

¹⁵ *Ibid*.

¹⁶ Ottolenghi initially launched the theories of the positivist school at the University of Siena, in the department of medical studies, where he was a lecturer.

¹⁷ Ottolenghi, Salvatore. *L' Insegnamento Universitario della Polizia Giudiziarie Scientifica* (Torino: Fratelli Bocca, 1897), p. 3.

¹⁸ Von Borosini, Victor, "The School of Scientific Police in Rome," in *Journal of the American Institute of Criminal Law and Criminology*, vol. 3, No. 6 (1913): 881.

¹⁹ Von Borosini, 883.

Fata Morgana

Enrique Gualberto Ramirez

Tooele County, Utah is a place of disarming beauty and rich history. In this anvil of clay and salt flats between the Great Basin and the Great Salt Desert, half-buried clumps of chaparral and sagebrush scatter in broken phalanxes of green, brown and grey. Here was the place where, for many years before Utah officially became a State in 1896, horsed convoys of Ute, Goshute, Paiute, and Shoshone eyed the vast landscape for glimpses of wild onion, potato and carrot. A series of gelatin prints by wandering, ex-Union Army ethnographers late in the 19th century reveal a vast, icy sky of gunmetal gray. The same skies, now depicted in numerous of websites and tourist brochures, collide with the somber, greying summits of Granite Peak and Skull Mountain encircling the desert plain. Hot summer winds from the South stir up columns of sand and dust that bury everything in its wake. In the cold of winter, underneath a brilliant mantle of stars, pools of condensation freeze, revealing tiny rivulets of ice that glitter in the moonlight. At the foot of the Cedar Mountains, one can even find wreckages of wagons from the ill-fated Donner Party. Higher in the range, bands of desperate miners combed the treacherous crags for hidden veins of silver in the 1890's. Between the former Pony Express staging area at Simpson Springs and Orr Ranch rests an abandoned stretch of the Lincoln Highway, built in 1913 to connect Lincoln, Nebraska with Sacramento, California.

Such evocations conjure a strange, short fiction written only seven years later, in 1920, by Salomo Fried-

laender (1871-1946). Called *Fatamorganamaschine* ("The Fata Morgana Machine"), this story tells of an unusually prescient collaboration between artists, scientists, and military planners occurring in a similarly remote desert. The main protagonist of the story, a cryptic filmmaker named Abnossah Pschorr whose sole obsession "was to achieve the optical reproduction of nature, art, and fantasy through a stereoscopic projection apparatus that would place its three-dimensional constructs into space without the aid of a projection screen"¹ created fata morganas of Berlin and Potsdam in the middle of an arid plain. The forms were intangible indeed, but like all purely optic phenomena, they momentarily instilled in the bystander a moment of doubt – could these forms be real? Yet such questions caused an ideological conflagration between Pschorr and the military elite, who refused to buy the fata morgana machine. The creation of purely optical battle lines, bombers, aircraft, as well as German buildings was conceptually problematic for the military, as they would inexplicably "put a dreadful end to war."

But in Tooele County, Utah, the exigent demands of global war conjured a more tangible (and less problematic) manifestation of Pschorr's fata morgana machine. In 1942, the Chemical Warfare Service, the branch of the United States Army that developed (among other things) flamethrowers and biological weapons, contracted with the Standard Oil Development Company for the construction of buildings designed to test the efficacy of the Army's M69 napalm incendiary bomb². Before the United

States Army finally ordered that napalm be used in incendiary raids against Axis targets in the latter moments of the Second World War, it had to develop a testing regime in order to determine the effectiveness of such a weapons system.

The Army and Standard Oil employed Erich Mendelsohn, Konrad Wachsmann, and Antonin Raymond to design a series of “typical” German and Japanese test structures to be constructed at Dugway Proving Ground for this purpose. Military planners placed great emphasis on architectural accuracy, as they wanted to determine the exact flammability of urban structures in Germany and Japan. Thus it may be of no surprise that for the design and construction of the German test structure, Standard Oil Development Company hired Wachsmann primarily because of his knowledge of German lumber and wood construction techniques. He not only was the author of the seminal *Holzhausbau-Technik und Gestaltung (Building the Wooden House: Technique and Design)* (1930), but working with the U.S. Forest Service, he could also determine that Coastal Douglas Fir and Southern Loblolly Pine would be satisfactory substitutes for the Scotch Pine and European Spruce typically used in German wooden construction. Standard Oil also relied on Erich Mendelsohn to assess the different types of housing in more than 15 major German cities³. Mendelsohn eventually designed the German test structures and signed all the architectural drawings related to the project. Antonin Raymond, on the heels of a successful 25-year career in Japan, provided similar data regarding housing in major Japanese cities. Raymond, for example, concluded that that Hinoki, Sugi, Pine, and Cedar could be substituted with Rocky Mountain Douglas Fir, Russian Spruce, Ponderosa Pine, and Red Cedar, respectively⁴.

Construction began on the German test structure on March 29, 1943, and on the Japanese test structure on April 12. A local building contractor, the Ford J. Twaits Company handled the site construction, with John F. Brandt as the project architect⁵. The German “Village” actually consisted of twelve “typical” German dwellings, each consisting of two separate apartments. Six apartments, three on the first floor and three on the second, imitated Rhineland construction, while another six replicated Central German construction. A series of walls

separated the Rhineland and Central German apartment blocks, thus simulating how each block would actually have interfaced with its urban neighbors. Although Central German and Rhineland apartment blocks were never found in such close proximity as they were at Dugway Proving Ground, the structure was nevertheless accurate, as the test structure “closely adhered to the authentic German construction, including framing, outer masonry and inner firewall construction, flooring, mortise and tenon joinery, and roof sheathing.”⁶ Although records indicate that significantly less work went into the Japanese test structure, a 1943 Standard Oil Report nevertheless indicates that 12 Japanese housing units were built.

A formal analysis of these buildings proves rather difficult. For one thing, they are inconsistent with the rest of Mendelsohn’s, Wachsmann’s, and Raymond’s work. A look at photographs of the German Village reveals nothing of Mendelsohn’s expressionistic élan, nothing of Wachsmann’s tectonic sophistication, and even a cursory look at surviving photographs of Japanese Village, shows nothing of Raymond’s Asian-inflected international style. The isometric drawings made by Mendelsohn of the German and Japanese villages are devoid of any type of experimentation – in fact, these are much more construction drawings than anything else. They tell of a project to be executed under the exigencies of war, a project that had to be disposed of fairly quickly. To therefore formulate any significance to Mendelsohn’s, Wachsmann’s and Raymond’s “Typical German and Japanese Structures” at Dugway Proving Ground beyond the fact that these were architectural objects deployed in the service of war, it must be admitted that the Dugway structures are knockoffs. After a studied glance, it is as if the only architectural valence one can assign to these structures is their ability to resemble, visually and materially, a certain German or Japanese style.

There is a double irony to this tacit admission, however. On one level, it is possible to consider the scenographic intents of both the war planners and the working architects.⁷ However, the Dugway structures create an unusual condition, for here is a set of buildings designed for their material and formal veracity. The physical equivalence of these structures is of utmost importance, whereas in a stage set, the only thing that really matters

GERMAN-JAPANESE VILLAGE

DUGWAY PROVING GROUND, UTAH

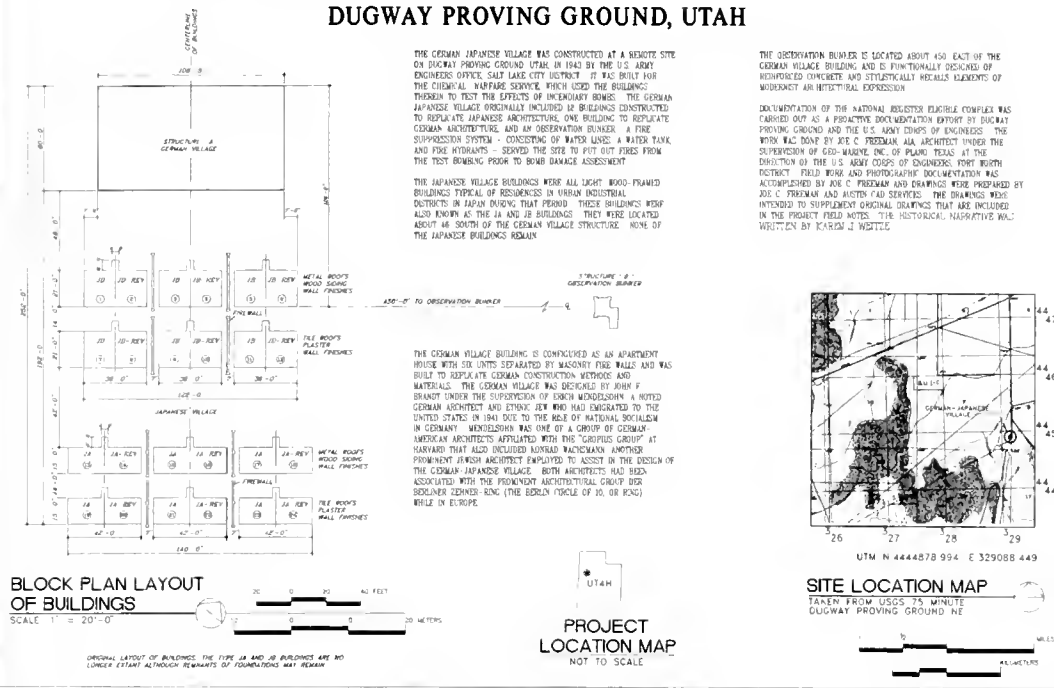


Fig. 1 Site Plan of German and Japanese Village, Dugway Proving Ground

is appearance.⁸ But what is also ironic is the decisive role played by professional set and production designers in the execution of this project. As with Abnosah Pschorr's titular optical device in "The Fata Morgana Machine", the Dugway project featured an unusual relation to the film industry.

The Chemical Warfare Service and Standard Oil Development Company devoted extensive time and effort to recreating the interior furnishings of Rhineland and Central German housing. Although no attempt was made to replicate the incidentals of domesticity (i.e. books, plates, pictures, *et cetera*), the Chemical Warfare Service and Standard Oil both agreed that chairs, tables, beds, and (in some instances) cribs could be built to provide a satisfactory level of authenticity in the German test structure. This task was delegated to Paul Zucker, Hans Knoll, and George Hartmueller.⁹ The Army and Standard

Oil also enlisted furniture makers from RKO Studio's Authenticity Division. This group of furniture makers, fresh off the set of Edward Dmytryk's blockbuster *Hitler's Children*, "provided professional advice on the furniture appropriate for German dwellings."¹⁰

It is curious how Standard Oil finessed the idea of the "typical" when considering the design and construction of German furnishings for the Dugway project.

The main indicators of "typicalness" were thus "density" and "arrangement."¹¹ The report thus presents the results of research completed by RKO, Knoll, Zucker, and Hartmueller, namely, that the density of movable furniture amounted to 9.7 lb./ft² in a typical bedroom, and 4.9 lb./ft² in a typical "living room-dining room", respectively.¹² These results were consonant with preliminary findings that "Articles of furnishing found in typical German dwellings are heavier in construction than American fur-

nishings” and that “More furnishings are crowded into available floor space in the German home than in the American home. Arrangement is such that the density of furnishings is more than twice that found in American homes.”¹³ The RKO team thus built “special furniture” that “faithfully” reproduced German furnishings, a set of chairs, desks, tables, cribs, curtains that were all “authentic as regards size and materials of construction.”¹⁴

Photographic evidence in the pages of the 1943 Standard Oil Development Company report suggests that planners paid more (if not special) attention to the issue of “typical” furnishings. As opposed to the nine photographs of German roofing and housing types, the report contains a total of 12 photographs documenting the various furnishings inside German Village. A discerning eye will reveal that the handiwork and ornamentation of the German Village furnishings is lacking when compared to its European counterparts. Yet what is remarkable about these photographs is that they indicate a perverse, concerted effort to truly approximate the look of German furnishings.

The first group of photographs, depicting “Typical German Furnishings”, show various pieces in kitchens, living rooms, as well as bedrooms. One photo, taken from eye-level, reveals a “typical Dining Room arrangement” complete with wooden credenza, chairs, table and settee. The furniture lines are surprisingly clean and sparse. A single lightshade hangs above the table. In the background (and to the left of the table), are a series of curtains with a floral pattern. Light streams in through the window in the back of the photograph, a parquet floor glimmers in the strange light. At the far right of the picture is a bookcase with some books. Although the photograph is grainy, a picture frame hangs above the credenza, which features a solitary flower vase. Another photograph shows an equally sparse, non-ornamented double bed. Around the bed, against the walls are a tall, mirrored, wooden closet as well as a series of small nightstands and chairs. On the rear wall, three picture frames, meticulously aligned suggest a sense of order and calm in this room. There is also a photograph of a kitchen, complete with wooden cupboard and shelves – all against a series of walls papered with a busy geometric pattern. In the back, branches of a wispy linden tree seem to

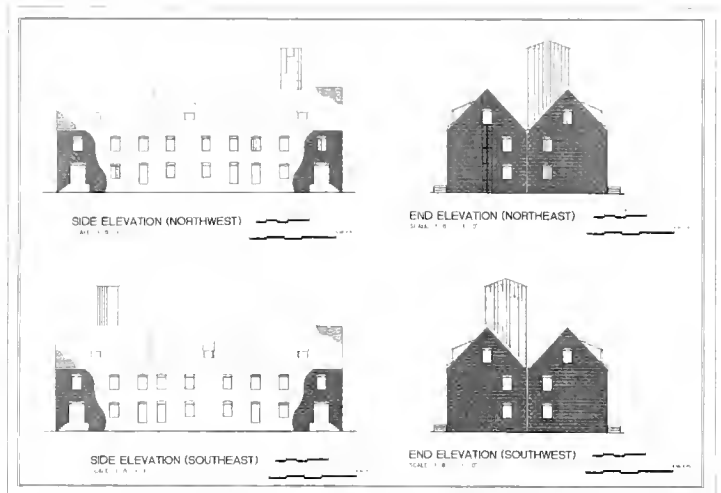


Fig. 2 3-Way Drawing of German Village, Dugway Proving Ground

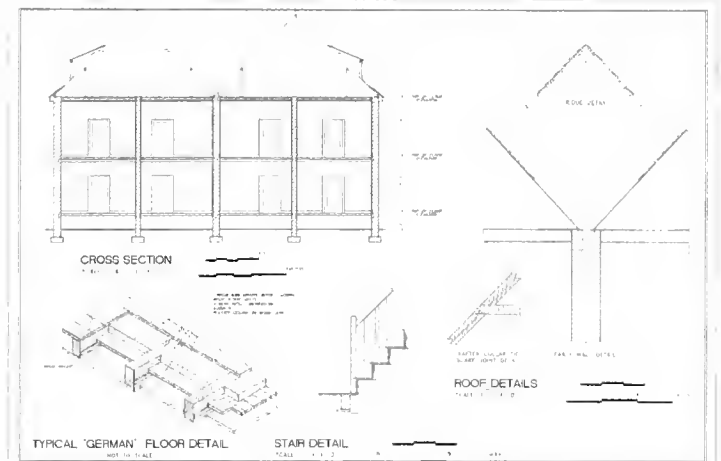


Fig. 3 Drawings of Floor and Roof Details, German Village, Dugway Proving Ground

brush against the transparent, double-paned glass. The last photograph in this series shows an “overstuffed” three-seat sofa, rounded, plump, with a black-and-white hexagonal dotted pattern. The faintly gilded frame and gut strings of a harp lean precariously against the front of the sofa, to the far right of the photograph.

The second group of photographs gives amore detailed views of living room and bedroom furniture arrangements. The uppermost photograph shows a “Typical Crowded Living Room in Workers’ Quarters.” A smallish, heavy wooden table covered in flowery dam-

ask sits in the center, surrounded by some heavily-ornamented strawback mid-Biedermeier chairs. In addition to a heavy sofa against a far wall, and among a series of heavily-stained shelves and credenzas, the room is cluttered with the *bric-a-brac* of domesticity: glass-covered gaslamps, music stands, silk curtains, chandeliers, photograph frames. To the right, the ghostly silhouette of a man appears to be stepping on a chair, shining his shoe, seemingly unaware of the camera only a couple of feet away. The photograph below, however, contains a more detailed view of the sparse bedroom from the previous group. Here, the furniture lines appear a bit more ornate. The double bed even looks disheveled. This vantage point also reveals the three photographs hanging on the wall. In the center, a painting of an old urban scene is framed in wood, with a bouquet of small flowers attached to the top. To the left, a medium-shot portrait of a man in Northern Renaissance garb, his face compressed between a dark, wide-brimmed hat and a ruffled collar. A fairly recent portrait of a woman graces the far right

side of the wall. The subjects of both portraits are looking in the same direction, their respective gazes averted from the light streaming through the window. A slightly-curved chair leg peers out from the side of the bed, and in the back, the twigs of a small potted plant reach into the natural light.

The last group of photographs feature "Room Arrangements in Germany." The uppermost photograph, labeled "Typical Dining Alcove Arrangement at end of Living Room" seems to confirm what previous photographs and survey concluded: a busy collection of heavy furniture pieces with very little floorspace. In fact, in this picture, not only is the floorplane obscured by the high amount of table surfaces, but the rear wall is also practically covered by a huge, gabled cupboard bearing large serving plates. There is a window on the left. Light streams through a series of diaphanous curtains with a faint nautilus-shell pattern. On the rear, three large beer steins seem to salute the viewer. The bottom picture, labeled "Dining Room", shows an equally claustrophobic space. The room features many large objects that attract the camera eye: a massive, ornate cuckoo clock, pictures of mountainscapes, heavily varnished credenzas and tall wooden cupboards, as well as a wooden table with a fringed cloth draped over its top. Three chairs flank the sides, the last, fourth side is near the far wall, and against that, a heavy sofa provides some seating. A tall, framed mirror stands in the right side of the photograph. The dark upholstery on the couch barely registers on the silvery surface.

The photographs featuring the German Village furnishings are interesting if only for their starkness. The first group, showing "Living Room-Dining Room" combinations, seem cold and antiseptic. Except for a rattan chair in the uppermost photograph, the furniture is rather angular. None of the wooden surfaces contain any routing or milling and are wholly devoid of any decorative finishes. The walls are smooth and bare, thus seeming out of place with the rather detailed window with curtains shown in the upper photograph. The three-seat couch, however, merits attention, especially when compared with the couch in the photographs of real German furnishings. As opposed to the plump, upholstered German couch, its Dugway analog

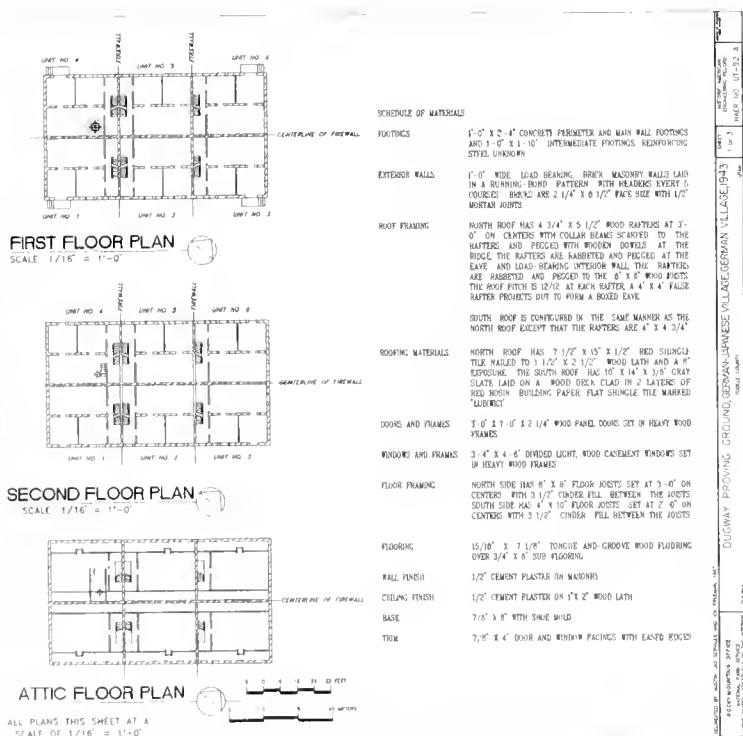


Fig. 4 Floor Plans, German Village, Dugway Proving Ground

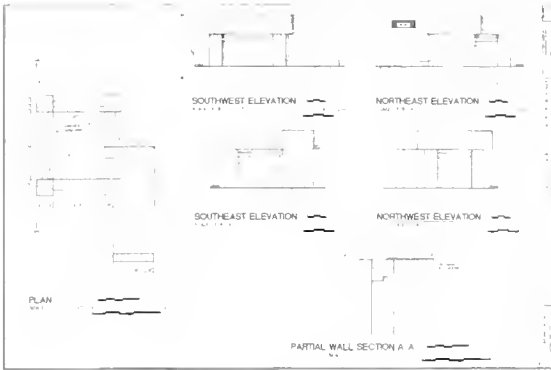


Fig. 5 Elevations, German Village, Dugway Proving Ground

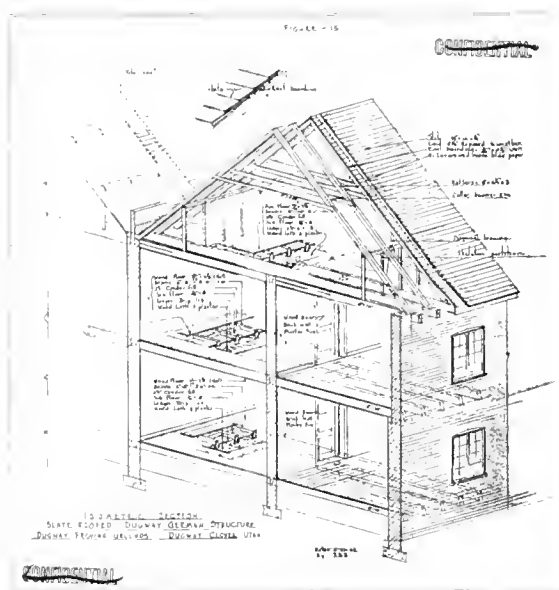
seems hastily built. Here, the couch does not even contain padded armrests. From the front, the couch has a strange, sketch-like quality. The sidearms move up in severe angles away from each other. The rear cushions seem too small and barely cover the back of the sofa. Unlike their German counterparts, these rooms look rather spacious.

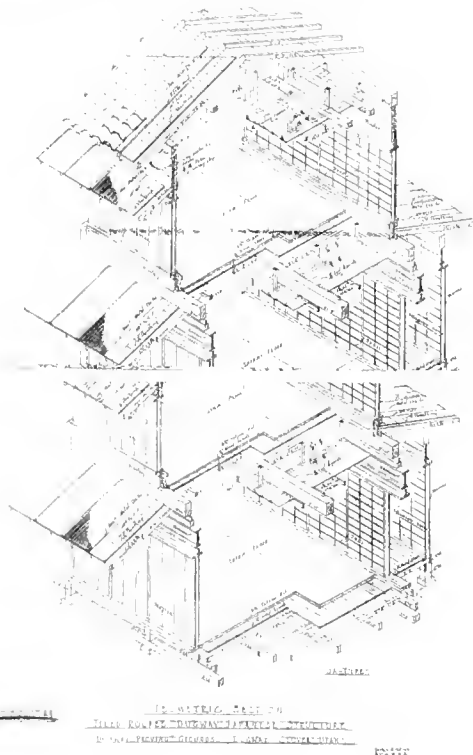
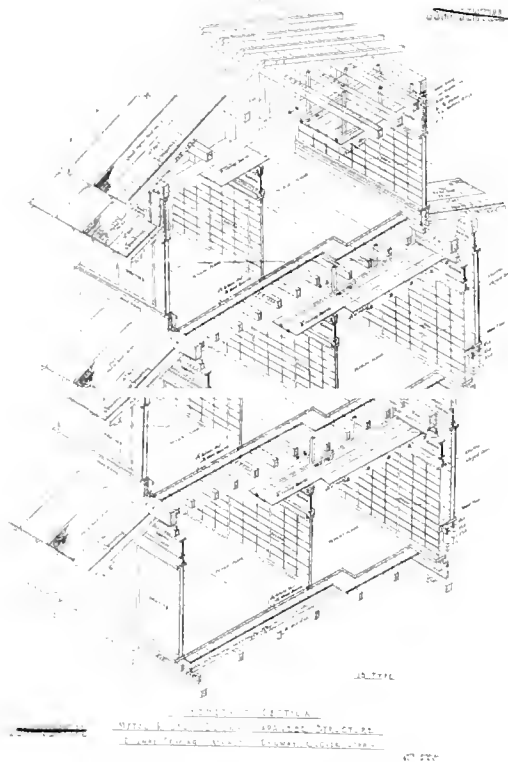
The last group of photographs is closer in depicting dense furniture arrangements. The upper photograph shows a double-bed and bedside table. Here, the light is poor. The lines of furniture seem to fade into the darkness. On the rear wall, however, the brightly-painted outlines of a credenza glow mysteriously in the under-exposure. And as with the previous set, this photograph prominently features another window with polka-dot curtain arrangements. The lower photograph gives a closer look at a clothes closet and recliner. Though hard to discern, the closet does feature some detail work.

What really distinguishes these photographs, however, is the presence of a heavy, untreated wood crib. In the upper photograph, the crib enters the lower left corner, and provides the most amount of detail. In the lower photograph, the crib is overexposed, yet casts a shadow on the opposite wall. It is the casting of the crib shadow that defines the space of the room for this photograph. This is a strange moment, not only because the photographs of actual German furnishings and rooms do not feature cribs, but also because the pictures of the German Village furnishings go to great lengths to actually depict this piece of furniture.

The photographs of furnishings used in German Vil-

lage speak to the issue of the "typical" more than the enumeration of lumber and masonry dimensions, than the description of cities in terms of roof area, or than the identification of specific types of woods used in German building construction. The photographs display what is "typical" in its most abstracted and rational sense. They are evidence of a *reductio ab absurdum* whose ultimate goal is to represent human activity in terms of untreated wood. These photographs thus eerily depict an absence of life, an absence made even more poignant and meaningful by the construction and design of a wooden crib. The empty, makeshift crib suggests the ultimate aim of the Dugway fata morgana: the horrible shift from habitation to incineration.





Notes:

- ¹ Salomo Friedlaender, "The Fata Morgana Machine" in Friedrich Kittler, *Gramophone, Film, Typewriter* Geoffrey Winthrop-Young and Michael Wutz, trans. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999): 134.
- ² Napalm, a jellied additive designed to prolong the flammability of gasoline, was invented and developed by Dr. Louis Fieser, a Harvard University chemist, under the supervision of the National Defense Research Committee. For an account of Fieser's work at Harvard, see Louis F. Fieser, *The Scientific Method: A Personal Account of Unusual Projects in War and in Peace* (New York: Reinhold, 1964), Chemical Corps Association, *The Chemical Warfare Service in World War II: A Report of Accomplishments* (New York: Reinhold, 1948).
- ³ N R D C, Miscellaneous Publication 282, May 27, 1943, *Design and Construction of Typical German and Japanese Structures at Dugway Proving Grounds*, Utah, SOD Project 30601, Washington, D.C.: N.D.R.C. 3. For additional material documenting this project, see Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, *Dugway Proving Ground, Dugway, Tooele County, Utah: Written Historical and Descriptive Data* HAER No. UT-35 (1984), *Historic American Engineering Record*, National Park Service, Department of the Interior *Dugway Proving Ground, German-Japanese Village, German Village: Photographs, Written Historical and Descriptive Data, Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*, HAER UT-92-A, UT0568 (April 2, 2001).
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- ⁵ Although Brandt's initials are on all the construction drawings, the exact nature of his involvement is unknown.
- ⁶ Historic American Engineering Record, *Dugway Proving Ground, German-Japanese Village, German Village: Photographs, Written Historical and Descriptive Data, Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings*, HAER UT-92-A, UT0568 (April 2, 2001): 7.
- ⁷ No discussion about the scenographic aspects of architectural modernism should continue without acknowledging Kenneth Frampton's important distinction between scenography and tectonics. See Stan Allen, "A Conversation with Kenneth Frampton," *October* 106 (Fall 2003): pp. 35-58. Frampton, "Place, Production and Scenography: International Theory and Practice since 1962" in *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1992): pp. 280-313.
- ⁸ I would like to thank Kurt Forster for pointing out this distinction for me.
- ⁹ N R D C, *Design and Construction*, p. 16 (italics added).
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*
- ¹¹ N R D C, *Design and Construction*, p. 7.
- ¹² *Ibid.*
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Figure 6-8 Drawings made by Erich Mendelsohn and John F. Brandt of the German and Japanese structures at Dugway Proving Ground

Aplam sniffs the ground and walks around. Aplam chases Biraia. Aplam says play with me to Biraia. Panchu walks to Sadia's **Backyard**. It is very windy. Sometimes wonderful smells swim inside the **backyard** and end up in Panchu's mouth. Panchu basks in a pool of sunlight, following it across the backyard. Panchu lays down **contentedly**. Panchu says pet me to **Tomoko**. Aplam **growls** when the doctor raises her hand, holding a **needle**. Aplam gets aggressive when handled by **nurse** and doctor. Aplam says pet me to Sadia. Aplam says pet me to **mother**. Aplam teleported himself to Chicago. It was moderately cold. There is a relatively even amount of hard and **soft** space in Chicago. Aplam is tied up to a tree at a safe distance from the house. Aplam keeps angels away from the near vicinity which he occupies. Aplam says pet me to **Sadia**. Aplam says grrrr I hate your smell to Panchu. Panchu **hopped** to Chicago. It was very wet. ...Cruisin' Southside streets with no heat and no sticker... U Ak got my back and we don't get no thicker... Eighty-Seven got my back and we don't get no thicker... Oh age got my back and we don't now check it... [Common Sense in 'Resurrection '95'] Panchu is smuggled into Sauk Path **residence** after **midnight**. Panchu is curiously regarded by all members of the household except for one. Panchu says grrrr I hate your smell to Aplam. Panchu **teleported** himself to Bahamas. It was very wet. The Bahamas requires paperwork to allow dogs into the country from abroad, but if dogs are very small, they sometimes pass by unnoticed. Panchu forages for food. Panchu runs around the sand. Panchu plays with new **Bahamian** dog friends. Panchu says play with me to Biraia. Aplam says pet me to Sakina. Sadia replies back saying, stinky poo you need a shower. Aplam ran to Brooklyn. It was moderately wet. He feels like The **Notorious B.I.G** and starts singing... "My Bed-Stuy flow's malicious, delicious... F#@k three wishes, made my road to riches... from 62's, gem stars, my moms dishes... Gram choppin, police van dockin... D's at my doors knockin...". Aplam runs away from people. Aplam is scared shaking his way through the street. Its Aplam's lucky day! He gets fed ice-cream. Aplam says play with me to **Chewchew**. Aplam says play with me to **Adam**. Chewchew replies back saying, too much work dude not now. Aplam barks at squirrels and the neighbor's cat. Aplam lays down contentedly. Aplam says grrrr I hate your smell to Panchu. Panchu ran to Sadia's Backyard. It was moderately windy. There are always the same two squirrels and one cat hovering near Sadia's Backyard. Panchu wanders around, sniffing flora and fauna. Panchu basks in pool of sunlight, following it across the **backyard**. Panchu says grrrr I hate your smell to Aplam. Panchu **surveys** the vast landscape of Serengeti and takes shelter under a low brush. Panchu meets the **wild** dogs and bitch about how global warming and urban sprawl are **depleting** their natural **habitat**. Panchu feels hungry and decides to join his new friends for a hunt. Panchu explores the Savannah and stops to sniff the **rhododendrons**. Panchu replies back saying, too much work dude not now. Chewchew replies back saying, too much work dude not now. Chewchew replies back saying, too much work dude not now. Shirley replies back saying, sweet pooch are you enjoying your petting. Shirley replies back saying, sweet pooch are you enjoying your petting. Panchu rolls over on grass. Panchu runs in circles aimlessly. Panchu sniffs and searches for pliable ground. **Happily** poops while going in a circle. **Sakina** replies back saying, sweet pooch are you enjoying your petting. **Biraia** replies back saying, let me get you a ball. **Aplam** says pet me to **Alexandros**. Sadia replies back saying, stinky poo you need a shower. **Sadia** replies back saying, sweet pooch are you enjoying your petting. **Jimmy** replies back saying, dude I don't pet. **Alexandros** replies back saying, too much work dude not now. Chewchew replies back saying, too much work dude not now. **Chewchew** replies back saying, sweet pooch are you enjoying your petting. **Shirley** replies back saying, sweet pooch are you enjoying your petting. **Aplam teleported** himself to Sadia's Backyard. It was moderately sunny. There are always the same two squirrels and one cat hovering near Sadia's Backyard. Aplam wanders around, sniffing **flora** and **fauna**. Aplam barks at squirrels and the neighbor's cat. **Aplam basks** in pool of sunlight, following it across the **backyard**. Aplam lays down contentedly. Aplam hopped to Brooklyn. It was very wet. Spike Lee grew up in Brooklyn, better known as crooklyn.

The Terrifying Beauty of Absence

Alexander D'Hooghe

This brief paper deals with the fascination, by generations of modernist architects, with transparency as the ultimate achievement of the project of abstraction. Within the modern movement, these architects are on one side of a prolonged debate between (emphatic) expressionism and (abstract) neutrality. This debate within architecture is relevant to the broader intellectual field, as it addresses questions of private identity in the public sphere – think of the current European debates about the burqa, and the broader issues about a public sphere built of diverse private expressions vs. one strictly neutral and autonomous within itself – and ultimately, possibly contains the outlines of a resolution to this problem. For as we will see, the project of neutral abstraction in architecture ultimately leads to a completely transparent public sphere. However, this solution, in its turn, ends up placing the objects of the private sphere into full view – effectively transforming these into public forms.

1914 not only marks the beginning destruction of the historic stone facades of Western Europe's cities. In the same year, the Belgian Fourcault invented a method for the commercial production of large glass sheets: flat glass. Early generations of Modernists immediately became enthralled with the revolutionary potential of this technology. For the first time in human history, it became possible to conceive of buildings, programs, etc – that would not be there; buildings, whose presence would be a studied kind of absence; whose form would have no expression.

1. White wall

The early modernist Adolf Loos wrote 'Ornament und Verbrechen' (Ornament and Crime) and built, at the same time, a series of houses that aspired to have neutral, expressionless facades. For Loos, this absence of personal expressivity, or subjective gesturing in architectural form, gave the house a public persona. The same Loos argued that architecture only existed in tombs and monuments, which were endowed with a similar sense of dignity: they were not the expression of individual anxieties and obsessions by their authors or inhabitants, but merely offered a contour of a public sphere, devoid of personal interest and achieved through a muteness, an absence of gesturing, sign language or other communicative (i.e. figurative, expressive) efforts. For Loos very aptly understood that the essence of the ideal bourgeois man was to distinguish between his public persona (neutral facades), and his private concerns (expressive interiors). Loos produced his oeuvre by and large before Fourcault's breakthrough, so he had to resort to white plastered walls and flat roofs. He was the first one to do so in modern Western architecture.

Loos' masterstroke was to turn all expressionistic architecture to vain attempts at personalized drama, in other words: melodrama or kitsch. Such was from then onwards the fate of his contemporaries in German expressionism, like Bruno Taut, Hans Scheerbart, and Hans Poelzig. Importantly, Taut had a fascination

for glass, but more for its reflective or shiny qualities than for its potential to absence. Their early investigations into an abstract kind of expressionism seemed like almost weak and egotistical in the onslaught of a modernism that presented itself as ever more neutral, abstract, and therefore valid for public expression. It is impossible not to hear, in Loos' words, prophecies of Habermas' later characterization of the ideals of the bourgeois public sphere, founded on Kant's principle of rationality as achievable through a conversation devoid of personal interests. Ultimately, Loos' view unmasks also the contemporary expressionistic whims of Frank Gehry, Morphosis, Greg Lynn, Zaha Hadid and Coop Himmelblau as mere kitsch. When Loos made the case for neutral and abstract public personae, the fine arts were simultaneously developing a similar project of abstraction. In painting, this eventually culminated in Malevich's 'Black square', a layer of white paint on a white canvass.

2. Flat glass

Then, everything changes: flat glass appears on the scene. Flat glass is even more abstract – so abstract as to not have a texture, so neutral as to not have an expression of its own. Mies van der Rohe took advantage of this new zenith of abstraction, culminating in his project for a Friedrichstrasse skyscraper, a project so radical in its systematic application of flat glass that it would achieve a degree of transparency unparalleled even in contemporary projects with more advanced glass technologies.

However, the early modernist position – that expressionless neutrality was the manner to achieve a civil public persona – was now reversed within itself. For while the flat glass surface was the most abstract and neutral public façade imaginable, it also ruthlessly exposed the interiors of the building to public view. This is a peculiar result of the more general aesthetic principle of what Colin Rowe and Robert Slutsky called 'phenomenal transparency' in 1956: Phenomenal transparency is 'the capacity of two figures to interpenetrate without optical destruction of each other' (Gyorgy Kepes as quoted by Slutsky and Rowe). Through phenomenal transparency, an object of the public realm and one hitherto relegated to the private realm sud-

denly appear in the same plane, and this simultaneity or interpenetration is made possible by the flat glass panel, which destroys not only the separation between both but also the depth (distance) between them, placing them effectively in the same plane of perception. So suddenly, a unified space appears – and this is a space as a collection of objects that are endlessly exposed to each other and to the public gaze. The older Kantian notion of a public sphere as a neutral platform devoid of private interests (objects) becomes suddenly rather problematic. And ultimately, transparency, if installed successfully, pushes architecture away from the facades, onto the design of interior objects. What are the responses to this? I would argue they are twofold.

3. Interior design

The ruthless colonization by the public gaze and its objects, of the entire formerly private sphere, elicits two possible responses from architecture: first, submission; second; resistance.

The first response to the ruthless subjection of everything to the public gaze and its regimentations – in other words, the submission of the private sphere to being networked – is an architectural paranoia to neutralize and abstract everything private or previously hidden from view, into public objects: Mies. For Mies, there was only one solution: the entire building interior, its private parts, had to become public personae. The logic of the flat-glass panel, and its underlying concept of neutral abstraction purges all the nooks and crannies and hidden corners of the building it from its privacy, opacity. Every object is now publicly visible, every act observable. So the consequence of flat glass is that the modernist project of neutral abstract has to be nested into all objects, be re-iterated over and over until the entire building has achieved an asymptotically achievable, perfect state of complete neutrality and abstraction. Thus, the initial Loosian premise of modernism – the neutral public persona, a dignity achieved by eliminating one's own expressionism and creating a poker face, while hiding the more private sphere from public view – has now been turned on its head: the private sphere, as such, has been abolished. The modernist project reverses itself: alienation is complete, inhabitation is no longer possible. After Mies, interior

design becomes increasingly integrated in the overall project of architecture.

4. Non-design

The other more interesting answer is the presentation of these formerly undesigned, un-public objects in the public realm as found. This, in fact, is what happened in painting. After Malevich's white canvas, art did not propose a glass panel (although it might have constituted a great statement at that time had it occurred). Instead, Marcel Duchamp arrived. Duchamp's ready-mades deal with transparency as well: the object trouvés – certainly most of all the urinoir, was nothing else than the most private part made most public. Duchamp's point was: everything can now be on display; flat glass transforms all private objects into public ones. So the elements of the private sphere float in the public realm, as found objects, as non-designed elements. However, rather than forcibly redesigning them in order to make them palatable to the public sphere, they are simply displaced and presented as such. Thus, both sides of the equation change. The formerly private objects are now making sudden public appearances. They can no longer fulfill their private functions, after their exposure they have become unfit for that; in a sense, they have become fossils, transmitting the memory of a former life. But similarly, the public sphere loses some of its abstract totality: it is disrupted, its transparencies, ultimately, serve as a platform for the presentation of a variety of private ideals which nevertheless have become impossible by virtue of their being in the public realm.

So Mies' solution was: design everything, formalize every aspect of life by neutralizing its appearance. Duchamp's solution was: design nothing; once the public sphere penetrates everywhere, and all things private are subjugated, the public sphere loses its value and becomes a totality; rather than complete submission to it, the presentation of the debris of former lives powerfully displays this violent disruption of privacy and informality for what it is. Mies' city is an endless, ruthless tarmac of publicness. Duchamp's city then is an endless, ruthless tarmac of publicness, dotted with debris, ruins, and fossils, embryos of non-totalized entities. Duchamp's revelation exposes designerliness as

terror, after Loos had already laid bare expressionistic designerliness for what it was: kitsch.

Thus, finally, the discovery of flat glass seals the fate of the architect as 'designer'. Her task now is the presentation of found objects and ready-mades, assembling this debris, the exposure of elements once formed outside the total gaze of publicness, as a powerful testimony to a world which was composed of various, different, spheres, rather than one total one. This is the terrifying beauty of absence: a world of found objects, fossils of a life currently unimaginable but also containers of an alternative imagination. The task of the architect in such a world is no longer to design, but merely to present discoveries and take un-designed objects out of their context and subject them to the public gaze. The inadvertent result of the flat glass invention, finally, is the end of designerliness as a critical act. As for the public sphere, the course towards its neutrality finally leads to an exacerbated representation of formerly private concerns.

K9 Computation: An Essay in Code

Kaustuv Debiswas, Sadia Shirazi

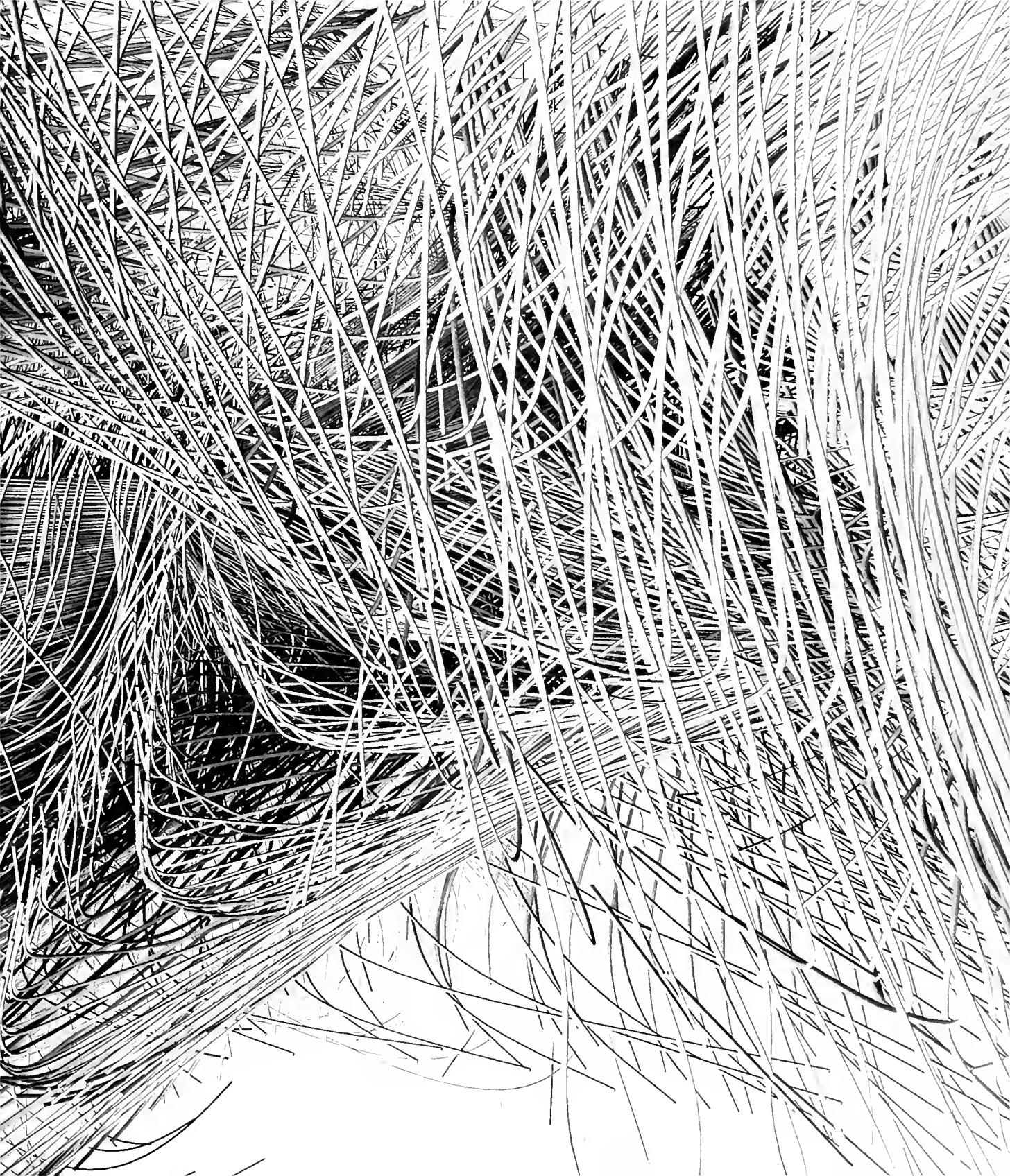
The diagram here is the essay, perhaps better understood as a meta-essay. It maps out the different kinds of abstractions present in the world, their interrelationships and the rules of interaction between them. The non-linear nature of this diagram and the stochastic embedded in the system create a constantly redefined range of interactions within the world. In every run, Aplam and Panchu trigger only a subset of the immense solution space of possible interactions thereby authoring a single instance of an essay.

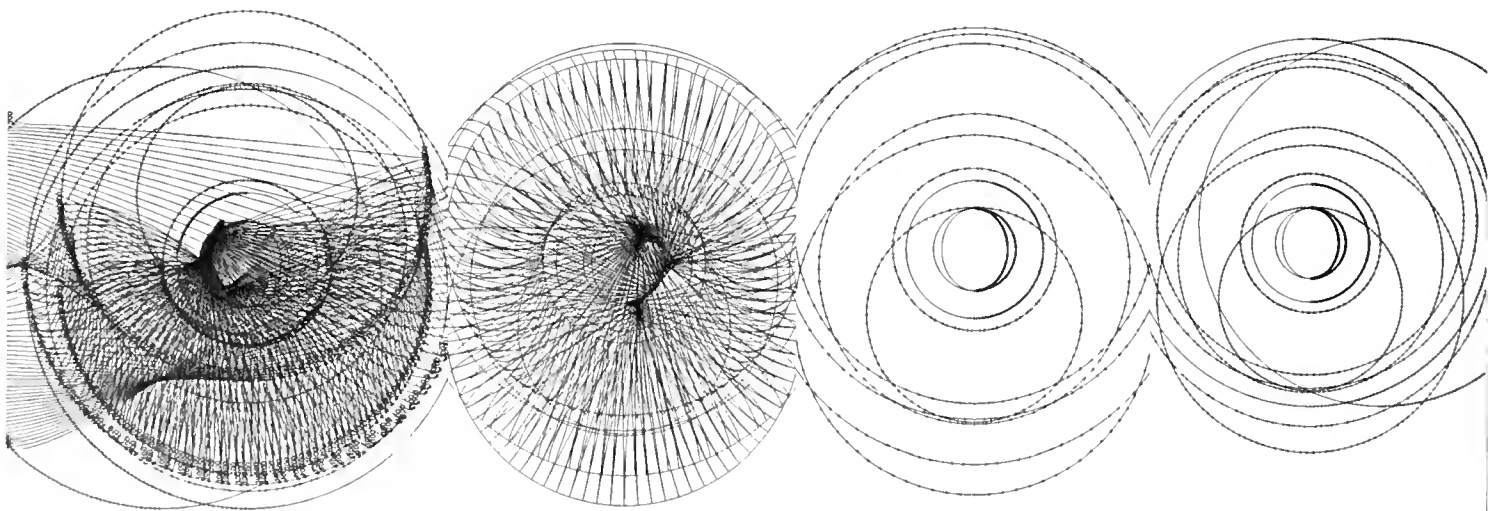
The essay that follows is not unauthored.

'Aplam' and 'Panchu' have real existences. The dogs are often seen prancing about the infinite corridor at MIT and here, in their unscripted warm-blooded existences, seduce all passers-bys with their respective charms. However, in the following essay, 'Aplam' and 'Panchu' are computational *ideas* or *objects* quite separate from their real beings. These objects are embedded with the explicit behavioral traits of their real canine counterparts. The world in which they are located is also an artificial, complex object made up of *Place* ideas such as 'Studio', 'Kilian Court' or 'Chicago'. In this world, the concepts of space-time are not physical phenomena but instead idealized artifacts. As 'Aplam' and 'Panchu' wander around this simulated world, they interact with other computational ideas such as *Human* or *Place* and, based on their embedded intelligence, react.

The power of computation lies in this recursive encapsulation of complex ideas into simple abstractions. Once we attach the symbol *Dog* to the entity which encapsulates its moods, responses and reactions, we move from a *low level* to a *high level* description. By enabling interactions between *Dog.1* and *Dog.2* and World, we produce narrative units which are then recorded as *Stories*. The collection of these *Stories* form the *Essay*. But, in actuality, no singular essay exists.







Vector Paradise is, on one hand, a fibrous island. On the other it is an inquiry into mega-scale manufacturing processes, probing the logistics of part placement in situations of heretofore unintelligible quantity.

The story begins with an idea about those characteristics we might consider essential to a fibrous island. It should have:

1. A fraying perimeter to disperse and mitigate the forces of the sea.
2. A dense interior terrain that can be traversed by foot.
3. One or more voids at the center, which would be nice spots for fishing.

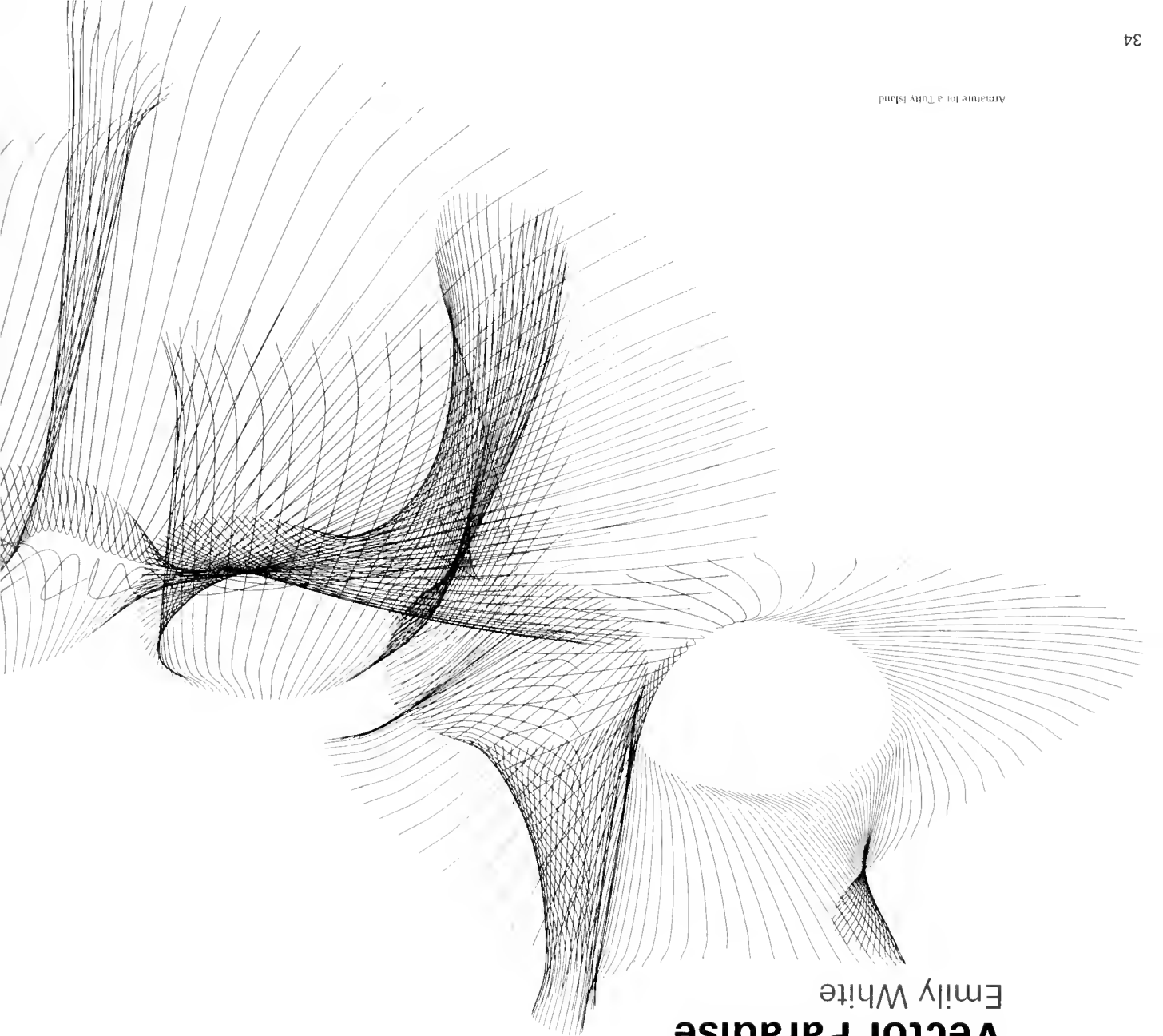
Based on these criteria, a multi-centered radial armature developed. As it is the nature of fibrous things to have a very high strand-quantity-to-strand-size ratio, the armature was designed to accommodate the hordes of strands about to descend upon it.

When manufacturing an island with so many parts, strand management is critical. A problem that arises out of this endeavor, to manufacture such an island, is the issue of strand management. In a project whose non-identical parts number in the hundreds of thousands, any attempt to arrange and locate individual strands, however patient and

earnest, is useless. With the island's spatial characteristics defined, but not the shape of its extents, what is most important is strand behavior and not strand positioning. The issue of strand management immediately shifts from a formal problem to a temporal one: how can one stage interactions among the parts? Or, rather, how does one sequence the strands?

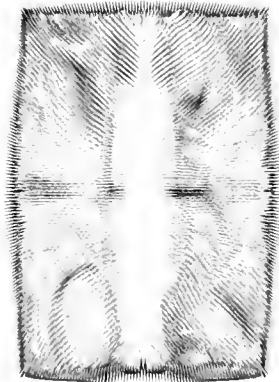
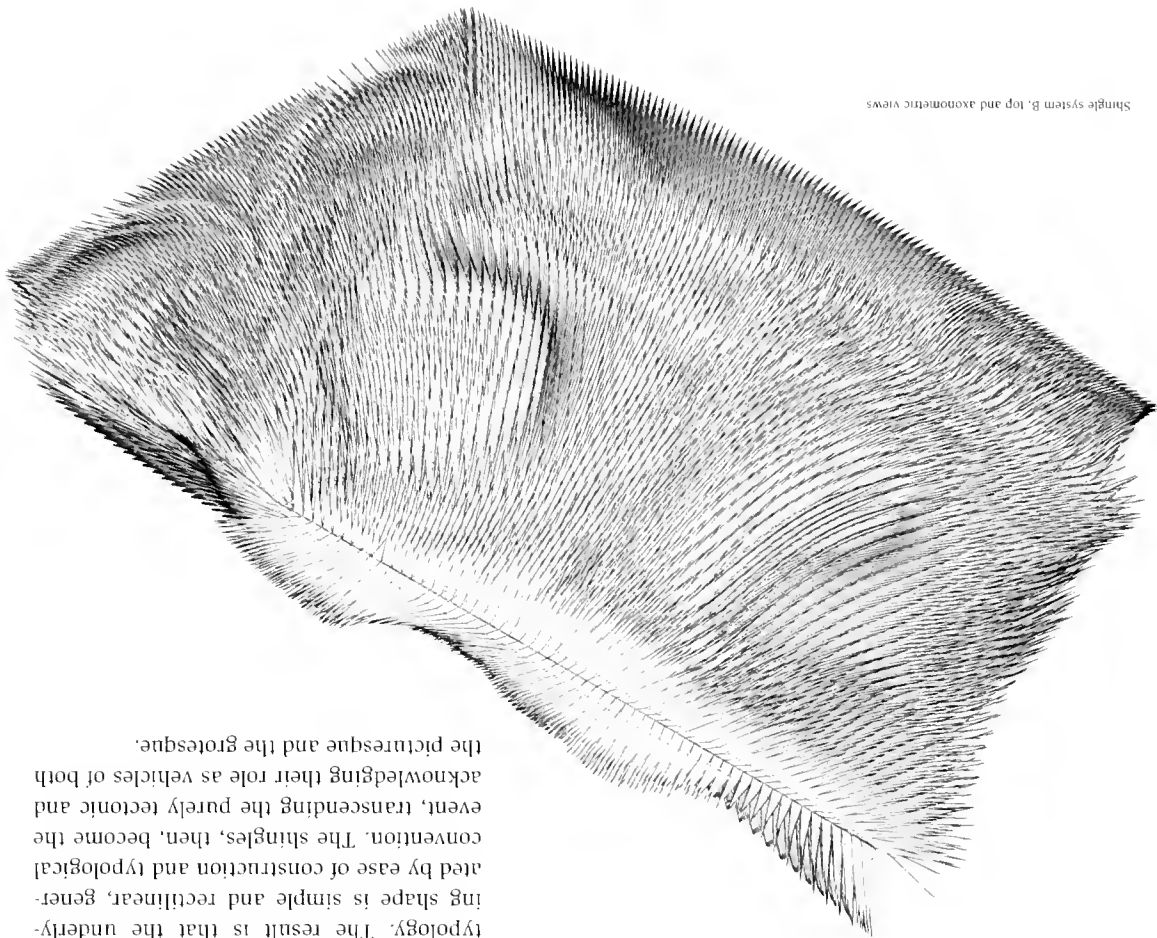
The tool that offers greatest economy as a behavioral strategist, satisfying our previous queries, is code (in this case MEL script). Research for Vector Paradise draws on the history of coding in textile manufacture and borrows operations from early computing (the Jacquard loom) and contemporary 3D weaving and braiding technology. Both of these manufacturing methods are based on the distillation of fiber behavior into rudimentary tactical moves.

Desired strand behaviors can be quantified and coded and the island can be manufactured in situ. Data ranges of the site begin to define local areas of strand behavior. As code gives us the ability to compute entire ranges of behavior at once, it offers great and luxurious variety. Strands commingle to produce thatches, tufts, frays, bundles, tangles and other land formations that define the island's overall formal character, in all its diurnal permutations. Vector Paradise is a negotiation between the scripted placement of parts and the ebb and flow of the site.



Vector Paradise
Emily White

Armature for a Tully Island



(UDFs). While the script used to populate the shingles across complex surfaces involved coding, the process of using UDFs enabled the shingles to be built and rebuilt using a more conventional and interactive geometric modeling process. The separation of scripting and process of geometric modeling was important, as it allowed for the design development to occur in conjunction with the less interactive coding process.

Gehry Technologies' projects use parametric shingles as means to construct larger, irregular forms, where shingles are subordinated to a larger shape. The project I am proposing is in opposition to this method of working. While I began my process of exploration experimenting with shingles applied to irregular forms, I ultimately reverted to the most conventional, vernacular house typology. The result is that the underlying shape is simple and rectilinear, generated by ease of construction and typological convention. The shingles, then, become the event, transcending the purely tectonic and acknowledging their role as vehicles of both the picturesque and the grotesque.

Among the most explicit manifestation of discretization are shingles, essentially defined as overlapping tiles that cover exterior walls and roofs. As a technique, shingles are found in vernacular architecture throughout the world. Their pervasiveness is due in large part to historical tectonic and construction efficiencies: shingles can be made of many materials and systematically applied to a surface with a reasonable threshold of craftsmanship. In contemporary housing, though, wooden shingles are used more as a symbol of domesticity than as tectonic necessity. A pastoral, shingled farm house, for example, is now an image of the picturesque, rather than a model of contemporary construction processes.

This project takes the vernacular definition of the shingle as its starting point, and begins to subvert the picturesque, embed a system of tectonics within shingling, and marry form with the shingle. This is done through an exploration of how computers and software allow for the design of complex systems, in which thousands or tens of thousands of individual shingles are instantiated and controlled through meta-parameters. The ability to control thousands of objects through the computer enables a level of complexity, precision, and predetermination that a conventional process cannot achieve. For example, one of my design prototypes contains nearly 15,000 shingles. The prototype shingle system gives the appearance of being composed of thousands of unique elements, but in actuality there are only 9 unique shingles in the entire system. There are 51 "type A" shingles, 161 "type B" shingles, 218 "type C" shingles, 935 "type D" shingles, and so on. Without the use of computers, such a tightly resolved and predetermined system would be impossible. The shingle systems shown are also universal, insofar as they may be applied to any surface shape or condition.

The shingles in this project were built and populated in CATIA, using a combination of scripting and User-Defined Features

Two spines, one curved and one linear, are divided into 60 equal segments. The spacing of the segment endpoints is projected onto a series of vertical lines, which then form spline control points.



Unshingled shingles



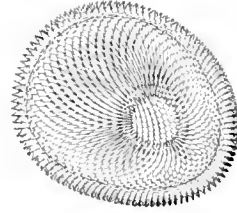
The same surface with the same number and spacing of the shingles but several times the thickness of the original



A basic triangular shingle instantiated upon a blob-like shape with varying degrees of convexity and concavity



Top view of high density shingled surface



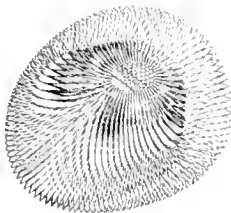
Top view of thickened shingled surface



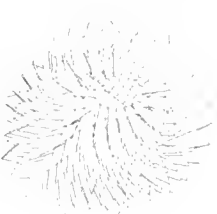
Top view of standard shingled surface



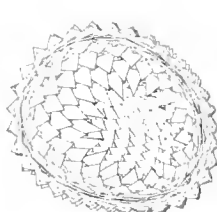
Bottom view of high density shingled surface



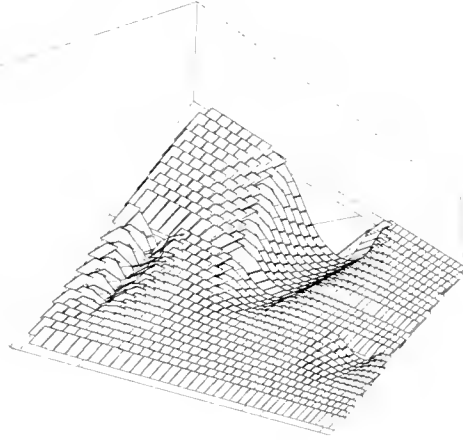
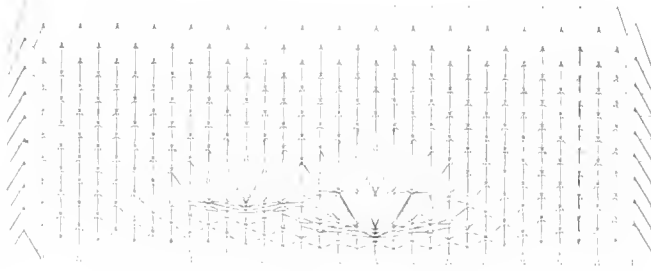
Bottom view of thickened shingled surface



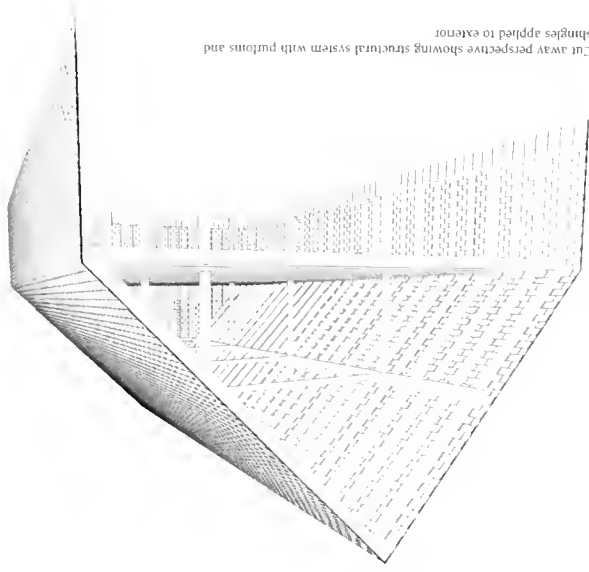
Bottom view of standard shingled surface



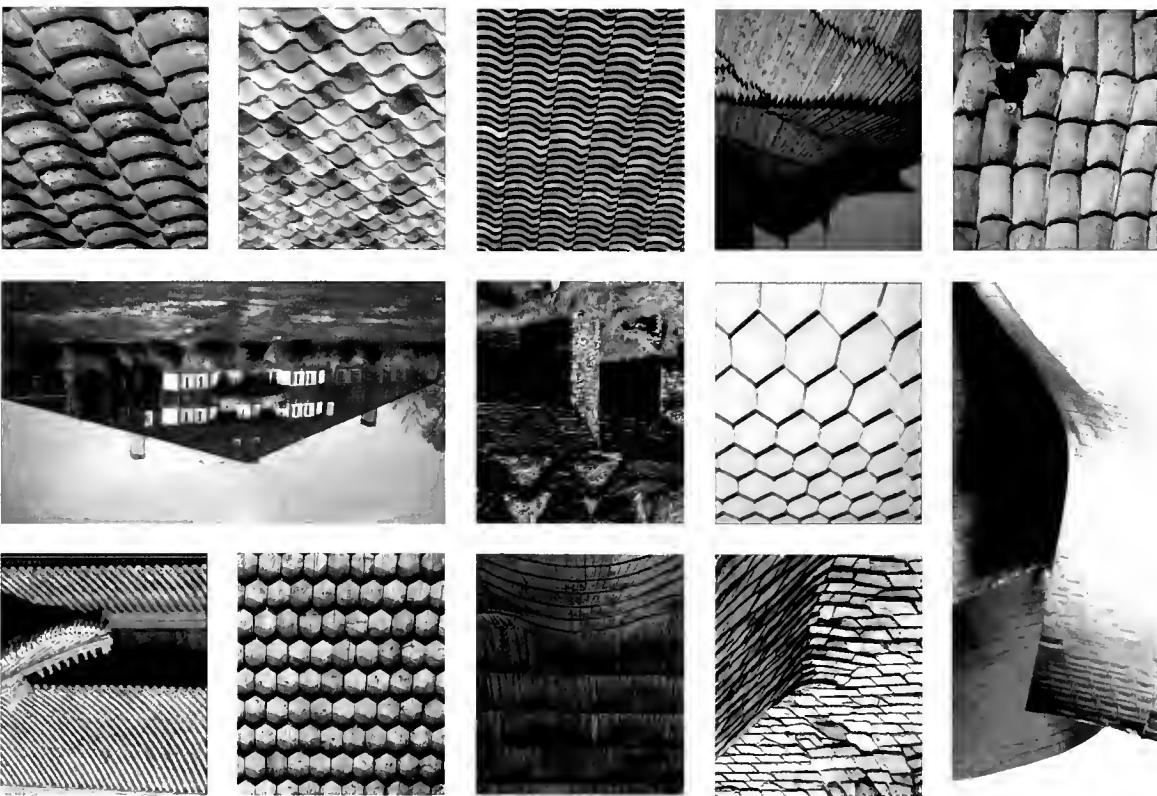
There is a discordance in architectural practice today between the abstract conception of architectural surfaces and the material necessities of construction. Despite the fact that contemporary CAD software has now become synonymous with excessive surface abstraction, ultimately, architectural surfaces require discretization into constructible elements—such as bricks, panels, or tiles. In the regular and rectilinear geometries characteristic of modernism, discretization was a nominal problem. Plaster and paint masked underlying structure, and cast concrete did not suggest the requirements of formwork. Contemporary advances in computer hardware and software, however, are changing the limits of what is constructible. The projects of Frank Gehry, which are shingle-based systems enabled by the use of CATIA and advanced computer hardware, famously transform crumpled paper models into titanium-skinned full-scale buildings. The shapes Gehry conceives of and designs are abstract and composed of continuous surfaces, but their construction requires discretization. The solution employed by Gehry's office is a system of shingling, in which individual shingles are assembled together to compose larger shapes. The construction of the buildings is enabled by software that digitally controls thousands of shingles, and coordinates them to be subservient to the previously designed form.



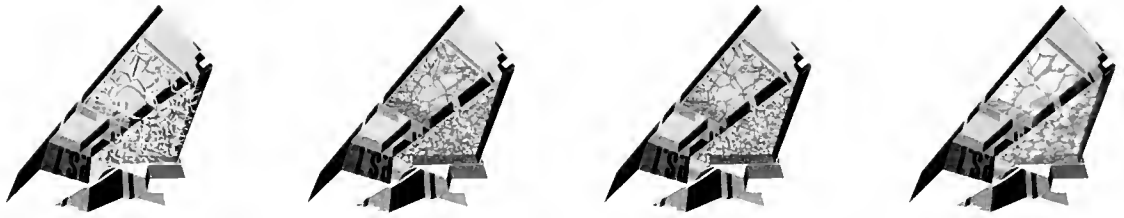
Rectangular shingles applied to a conventional roof dormer arrangement, showing the effects of different scales of distortions



Cut away perspective showing structural system with purlins and shingles applied to exterior

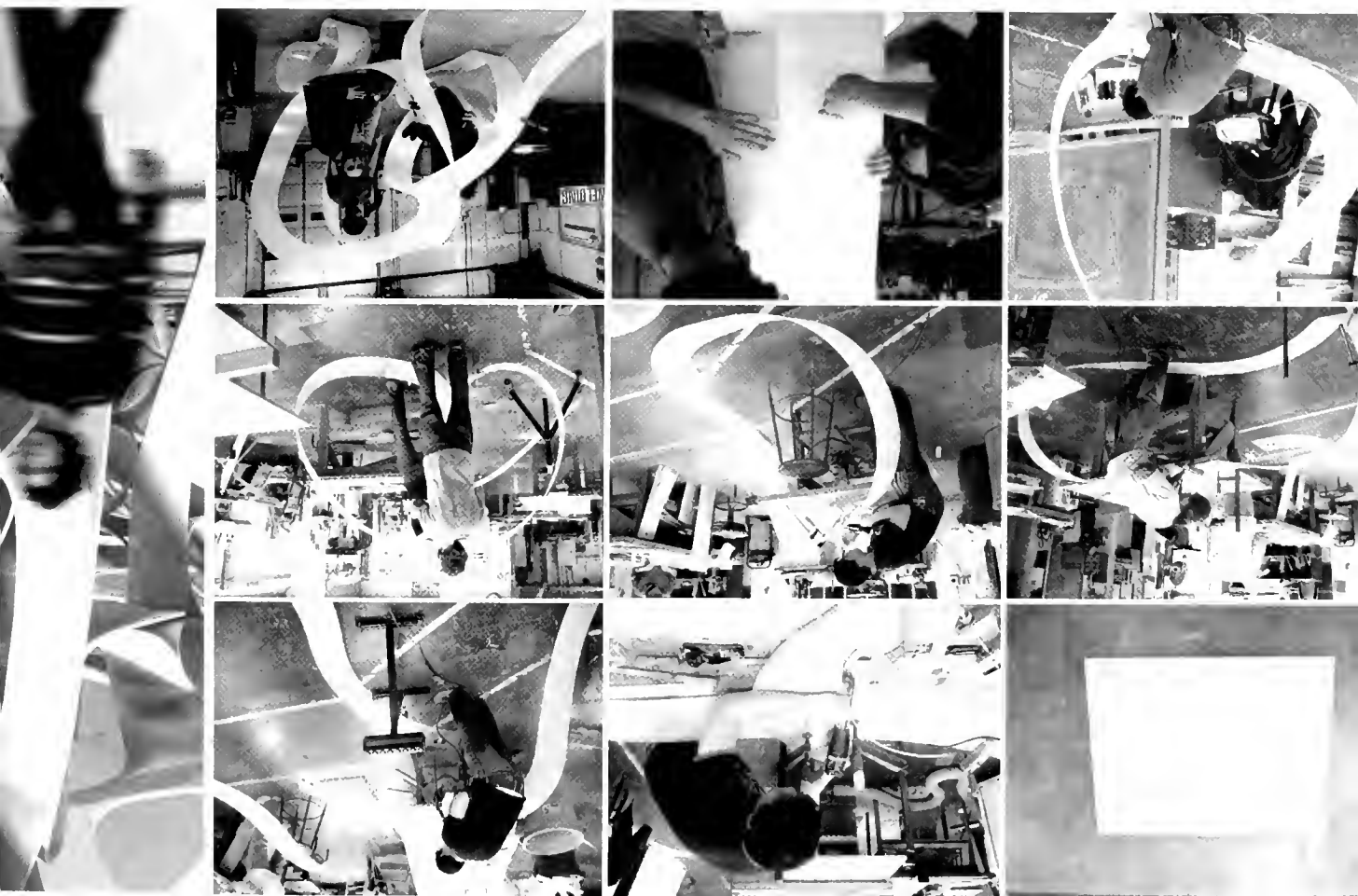
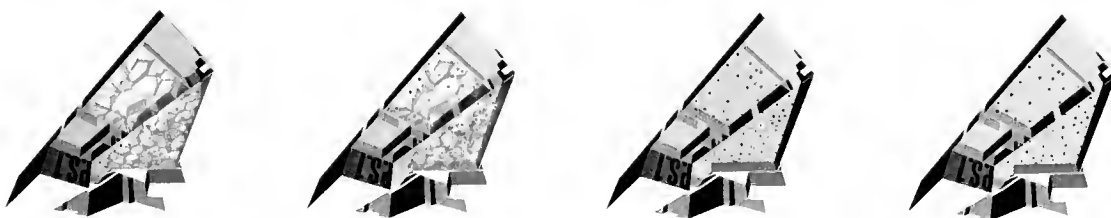


Shingle
Adam Modesitt



Design Team: Howeler + Yoon, I. Muneun Yoon, Eric Howeler, Jimmy Shen, Carl Solander, John Savage, James Smith, Saeed Arda, Yi Hsiang-tiao, Qilin Zhekov, Lisa Smith





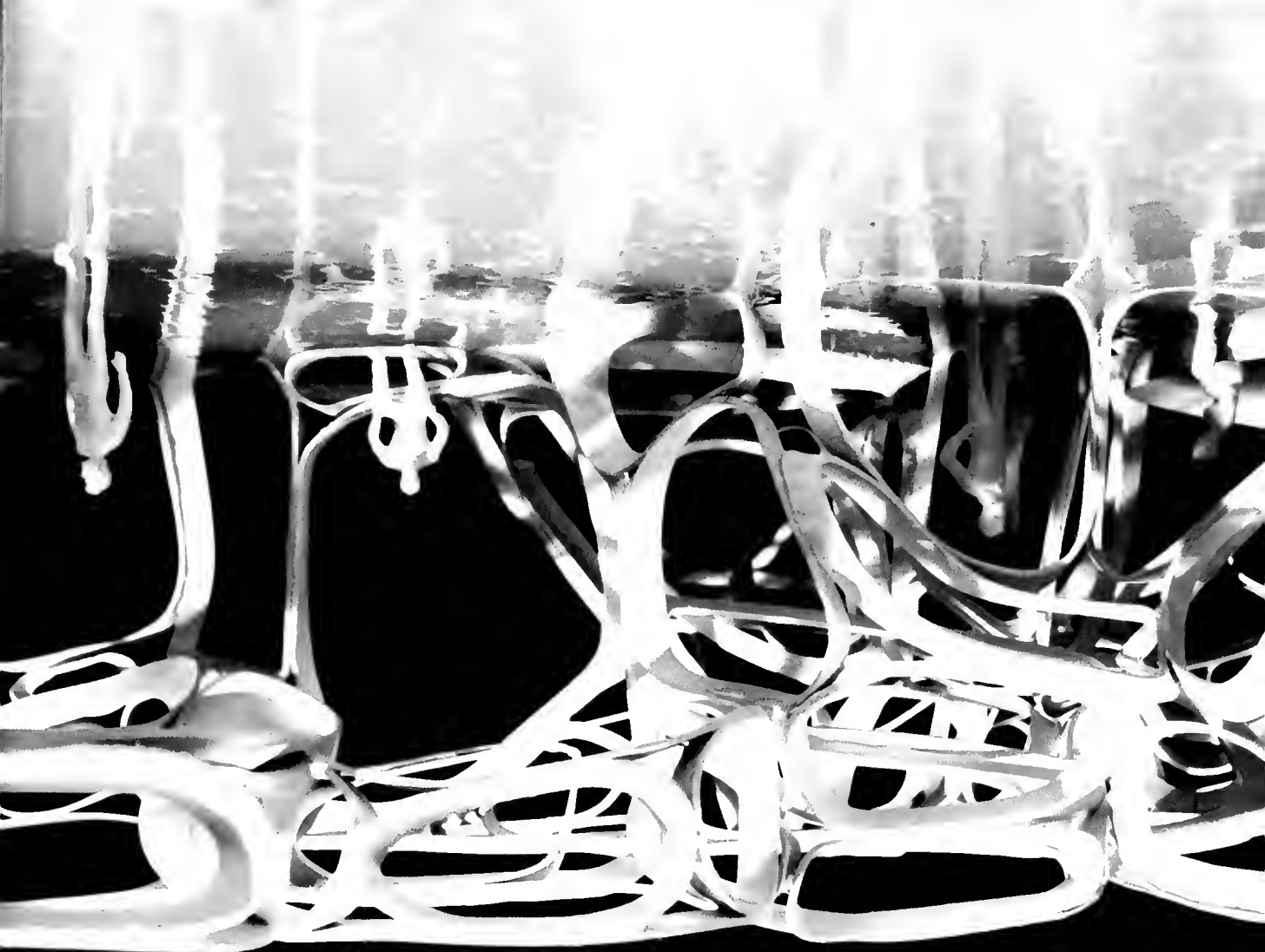
Part landscape, part infrastructure, *LOOP* is a hybrid space that reinterprets PSI's courtyard program of the "urban beach" as something both contemplative and event driven. Instead of a discreet architectural object positioned as a feature within the courtyard, *LOOP* presents a "loose fill" of architectural form, allowing simultaneously for complete porosity and total coverage. The geometry is generated through an analysis of cellular aggregates, suggesting an uninterrupted lattice of form which outlines connections between spaces. There is no complete enclosure or exposure, but a suggestion of continuous spatial divisions. By packing the single continuous space of the courtyard with a network of smaller spaces, *LOOP* both encourages and defines the formation of discreet activity groupings that occur spontaneously during the Warm-Up event. The closely packed geometries house the closely packed activities—forming an infrastructure for recreation.

The main components of *LOOP*, the loops themselves, are designed and fabricated through digital processes. The three-dimensional components, formed out of polypropylene sheets, are first modeled in the computer. These shapes are then unfolded and divided into segments which are nested onto 5x10 sheets to minimize material waste. The segments are milled and labeled offsite, then transported to the PSI shop where they will be joined with a plastic welder. Finally, the individual loops would be mechanically fastened together onsite.

LOOP is a pliable latticework, a jungle gym for adults and children, containing and supplying a number of interactive activity clusters. Its lower surfaces are sculpted and reinforced for lounging while the upper canopy provides generous shade and dramatic shadows. Its various spaces are wet, bubbly, and bouncy: wading pools, waterfalls, bubble jets, a foam chamber, and giant trampolines. Some of these areas—the waterfalls, foam chamber, and bubble jets—would use motion sensors to automate their activation, allowing *LOOP* to respond to its occupants. The bar area is defined as an outdoor lounge, while the unobstructed dance floor is outside of the lattice. Easy passage through the courtyard is facilitated by greater porosity in bar area is defined as an outdoor lounge, while the unobstructed dance floor is outside of the lattice. Easy passage through the courtyard is facilitated by greater porosity in the central, high-traffic areas, and greater density at the periphery, which both allows for movement through the center and encourages loitering at the edges.

LOOP aspires to be a completely immersive social environment. It seeks to create an atmospheric thickening of the ground plane: to provide a field for the unpredictable unfolding of social exchange. Through its employment of computational design, fabrication techniques, interactive technologies, and its concern for the impact of these technologies on material effects, *LOOP* positions itself within contemporary theoretical discourses in architectural practice. Its geometry is controlled through computational tools that anticipate an optimized "output" through CAD/CAM technologies. Its form, however, is not simply "digital"—it is also the result of a highly manual process that takes material properties (ductility, elasticity, bending) and exploits them through computational techniques.





LOOP

J. Meejin Yoon

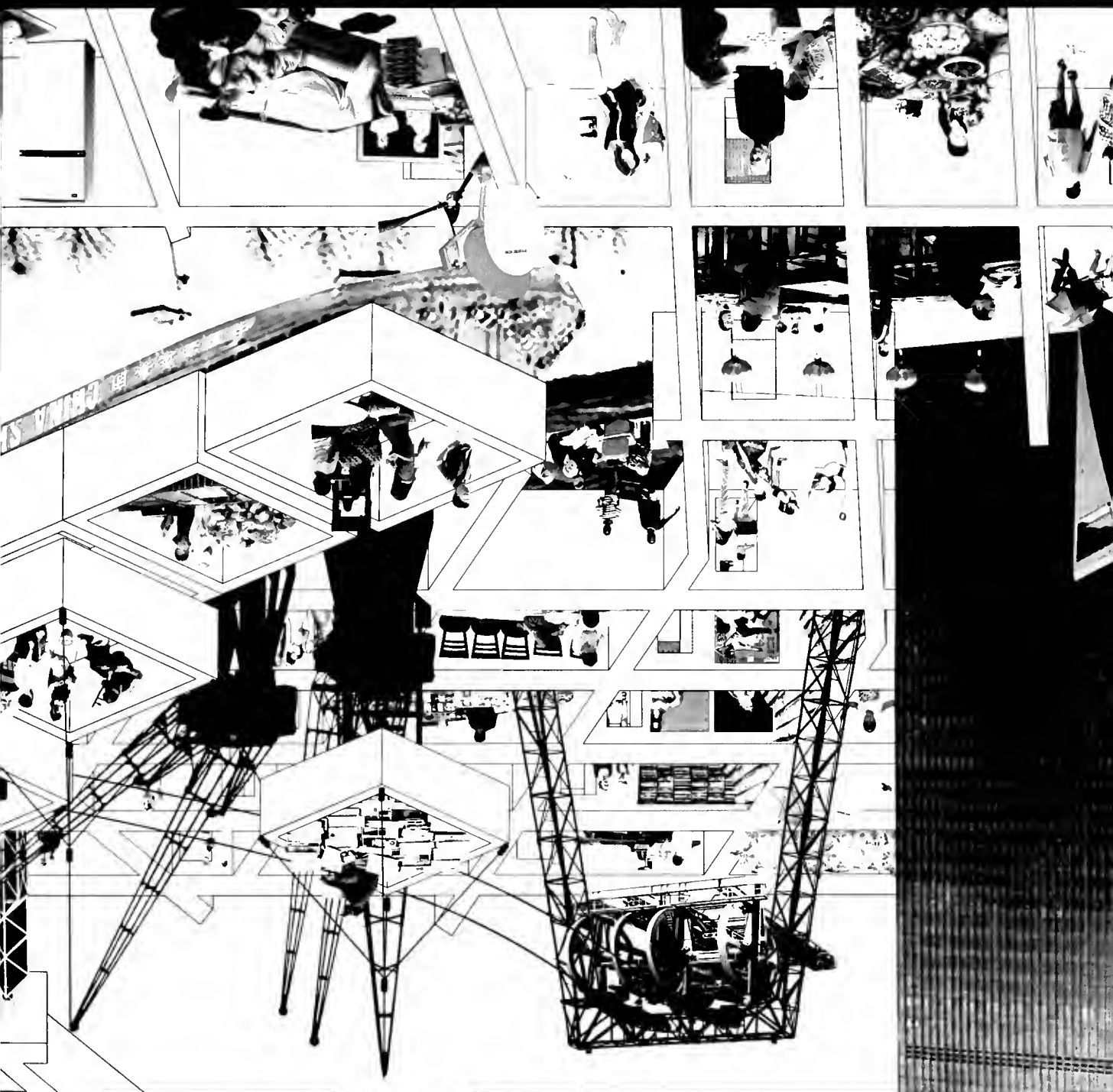
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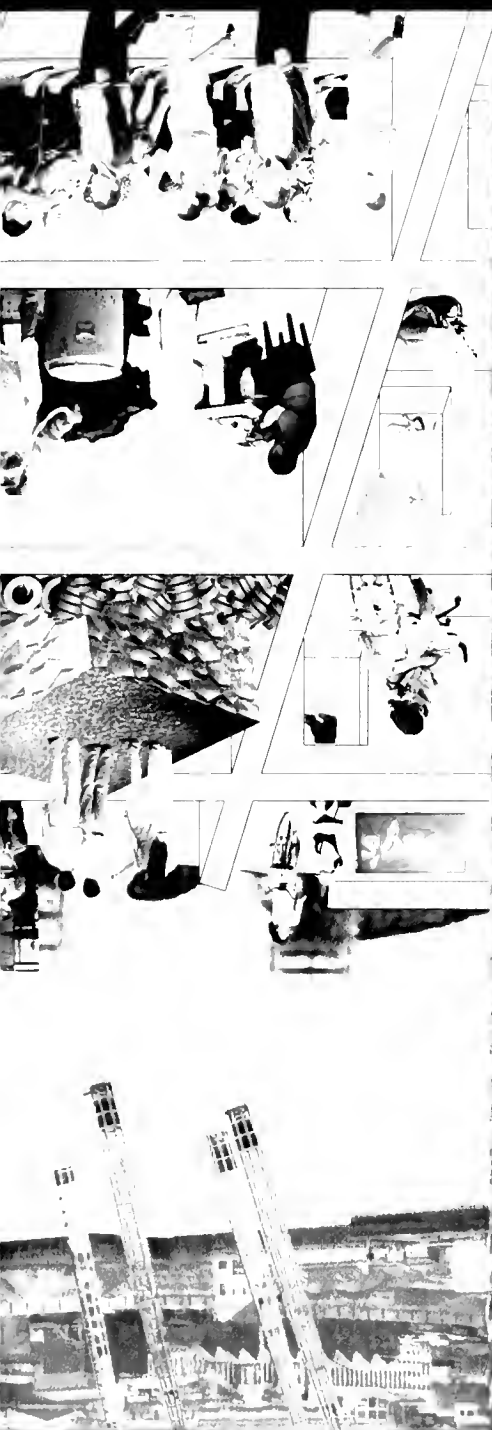
May's opinions are in China, Jan. 25, 2014, <http://news.163.com/14/0127467.htm>.
2. Lord in Heilongjiang, Gov. Area, the Times

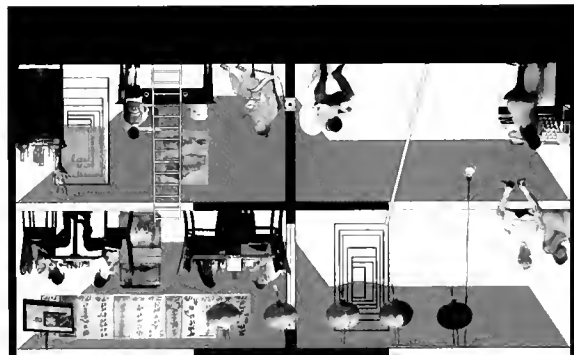
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14-5 545
http://arxiv.org/abs/1404.0001 [in arXiv preprint, April 1, 2014].
14-6 546
http://arxiv.org/abs/1404.0001 [in arXiv preprint, April 1, 2014].







2008

The construction of public transportation and habitable square footage become monumental public enterprises.

But can London undertake the challenge alone?

The newly formed Socialist Chinese-British Port Authority Development Corporation (SCBADC) is formed

to start building in the city. Their mantra: "We bring the

Olympics to you!" Or is it, "We bring China(town) to

you!"

2009

The SCBADC delivers prefabricated Made-in-China units prepackaged with complementary Chinese residents. Shipped along the Thames River, lifted by cranes and plopped down at Canary Wharf, the units become an instant city of imports equipped with goods and services, with residents skilled in Olympic-sized construction.

2010

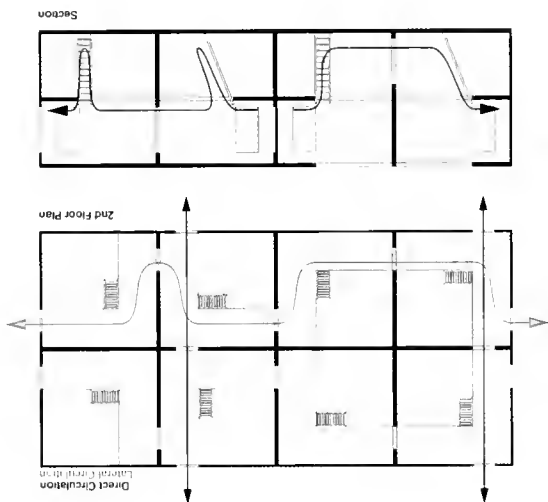
Automobiles become outmoded luxuries as oil prices skyrocket. The Tube operates beyond capacity. London's housing shortage is exacerbated by an influx of suburbanites into the city as transportation costs rise unabated.

2011

The Chinatown building units expand, swallowing London's streets. Is this the Chinatown that Livingstone had envisioned? The Olympics are coming.

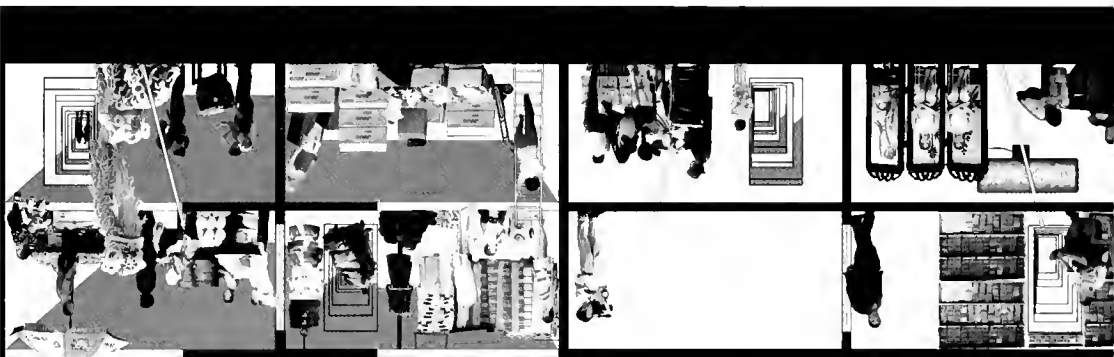
2012

Streets are eradicated, the interior takes over. Private property becomes public. Public property becomes private. Welcome to China in London.



China In London

JennTran and Jimmy Shen



2004

Mayor Livingstone announces plans for constructing a new Chinatown in London's Thames Gateway, not far from the city's original Chinatown in Limehouse.

With an eye on economic alliances, Livingstone earnestly exclaims: "We want London to be the Chinese economy's gateway into Europe." And that "The second Chinatown will be at the centre of tourism in London."

In the meantime and with unabashed confidence, the Government promises 120,000 new homes by 2016 to ease the housing crisis in the city's South-East.²

2005

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) announces London's successful 2012 Summer Olympic bid.

2006

Impressed by the speed of Beijing's 2008 Games preparations

2007

"Oil prices near seven-month high in London" reports London's *Inquirer*.⁵ And yet the city must build as 2012 approaches.

Chinatown.⁴

tion reports no progress in the building of the city's new Chinatown. Meanwhile, the London Chinese Association help train the Chinese football team.

London, says Livingstone, can learn from Beijing's efforts of organization, and in return the British city can help train the Chinese football team.

claimed "Bird's nest."³

Olympic sites, and in particular, at the architecturally ac-

mitation of the mobilization of Chinese workers on the

China's *People's Daily Online* reports the mayor's ad-

warm relations between London and the Chinese capital.

ation, Livingstone, in a state visit to Beijing, pledges

These thoughts lie at the foundation of our proposal for Guangming. It is a reflection of Shenzhen, but also an improvement in miniature, for Guangming is a small city in comparison to Shenzhen. This is its paradox: It is a city, but themed to the essence of Shenzhen, part ratio-nality, part image.

2. GUANGMING AND TERRITORIAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Empty Heart: The area in which Guangming is located is on the verge of being suffocated by the sprawling developments southward from Guangzhou and northward from Shenzhen. Our scheme divides the city into two and clears the central area of the valley for agriculture, agro-tourism and landscape; there will be no urban development in the middle.

2. Territorial Figure: We propose to use infrastructure to clarify, make legible, and organize the territory in the most efficient and simultaneously poetic way possible. The deployment of infrastructures of mobility as clear territorial figures, visible from satellite (with Google Earth) establishes monuments that amount to a 21st century version of the Chinese Wall; instead of the closing of land, today's territorial figures open it up.

Infrastructure not only structures flow; it is also a barrier; we use the territorial figure of infrastructures to effectively bind and limit the project. So the infrastructures are not gratuitous scars on the land; they are effective growth boundaries. Thus, the territorial figure defined by infrastructure not only establishes its own autonomous figure, but also in effect gives a figure to urban growth itself.

3. GUANGMING AND THE ECO-REVOLUTION

Unlike Shenzhen which is a modern city according to the prototype of the 1980s, Guangming is a modern city of a new age, an age after the eco-revolution. The eco-revolution, for us, does not mean that we make high-end green buildings, but don't change the city. It means for us a simpler city that allows for more efficient use of transportation, infrastructure in combination with an intelligent approach to the city's metabolism. The principles of the eco-revolution require:

1. The reduction of cars in the city through an extensive park and ride system that links the highway with the city's electrical trams.
2. Integrated highway-warehouse and urban blocks to reduce delivery traffic.
3. The creation of a high-end urban agro-industry sector within the city and in the peri-urban areas that can produce food stuffs locally.
4. The direct proximity of agro-urbanism to market streets.
5. The creation of waste dumps and recycling facilities using the latest technologies to limit waste export.
6. The creation of nearby wind and solar farms and their integration into the infrastructure.

4. GUANGMING AND ITS URBAN CHARACTERISTICS

We designed Guangming according to what we consider to be the three essential elements to a successful city.

1. Streets: Our city is a city of streets not blocks. The "urban block" mindset has made it impossible to design cities with character. Character comes from streets. Our streets will be designed with different prototypes in mind: market street, canal street, residential street, boulevard, promenade, etc. This will create diversity of use, program and experience.

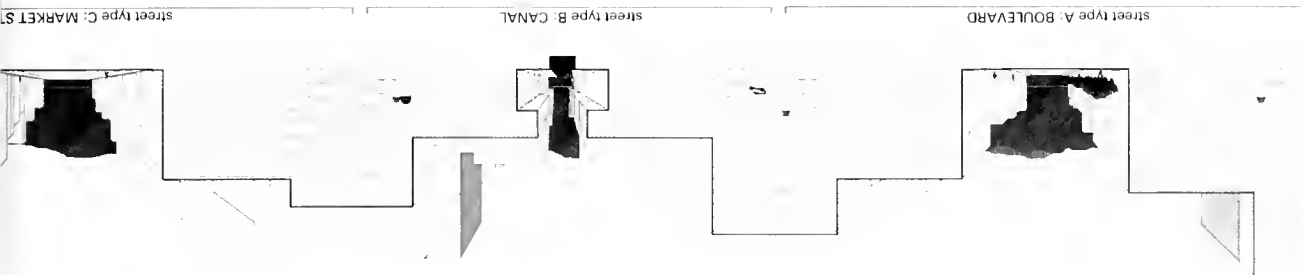
2. X-Spaces: The city will be punctuated by non-designated spaces will allow for changing and multiple civic uses. In the city these will take the form of hollows placed in the rhythm of the streets. There will also be X-Spaces outside the city that will serve as destination points for the urban residents.

3. Branding: The branding of the city will revolve around the 1. The city's advanced eco-infrastructure, 2. The regional agro-industry (the cows, milk production and lychee farms), and 3. The dozens of fountains planned for the city, given the wealth of water in the area. Guangming will prove that a modern city can be a tourist destination.



street type E: ELEVATED HIGHWAY

street type D: NARROW STREET



marketing and the need for mobility.

Construction, Economy, Circulation, Environment are not separate categories. Each modifies the others, and it is in this that our New Radian City is different from the Radian City of old. There is no single place where "circulation" takes place, for example. Though for practical reasons, we might put traffic under the heading of circulation, but one also has to remember that money circulates; that human waste circulates, and that even politics circulates.

The New Radian City must reduce its guiding principles to a very few. It does not even have to determine all

Shenzhen is a city of work and a city of play. It is a city of production and a city of the imaginary. It has all the advantages of its new infrastructure and all the disadvantages of its new wealth. It has a developing middle class and a massive undocumented labor force. In short, it is a city that thrives on its modernity.

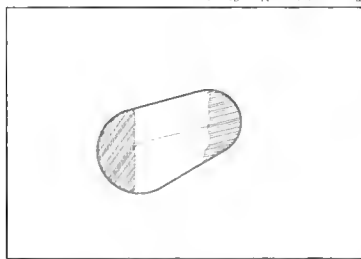
1. GUANGMING AND SHENZHEN

Shenzhen is a city of work and a city of play. It is a city of production and a city of the imaginary. It has all the advantages of its new infrastructure and all the disadvantages of its new wealth. It has a developing middle class and a massive undocumented labor force. In short, it is a city that thrives on its modernity.

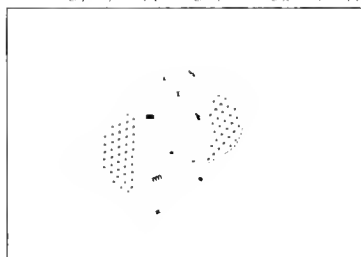
The project is the result of a synthesis of various student projects developed in the Fall 2006 Shenzhen Studio. Thus, the research community for this project includes: Arjun Bhai, Daniel Yi-Hsiang Chao, Sarah Dunbar, Margaret Huang, Coryn Kempster, Casey Renner, Matt Trinkle



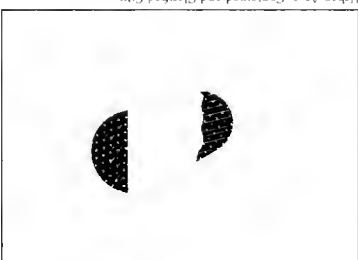
Urban Area Chinese Sprawl



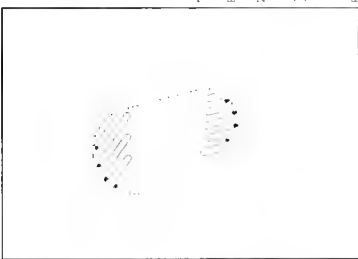
Transportation New Streets



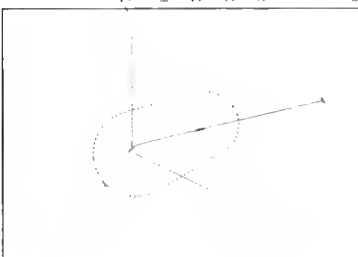
Urban Area X-Space in the City and Agricultural Core



Urban Area Contained and Claimed City



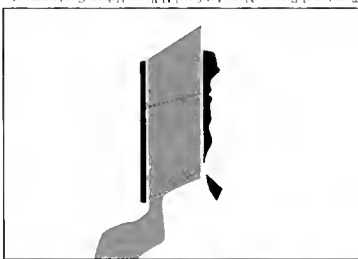
Transportation New Tram Lines



Transportation New Main Mass-Transit Lines



Guangming New Radian City



Territorial Figure New Artificial Hills as Urban Containment Lines and Resultant Green Space



Territorial Figure Existing Boundaries

For a century industrialization has broken up the city, been responsible for its disintegration into slums, industrial quarters, and urban peripheries. But we can project something better by renouncing the dualities that were used to hold the city together in its artificiality: work-leisure, habitavilla quarter, and core-periphery. The suburbs that sprouted after WWII were a search for a new, alternative coherence, more integrative and more network/image based. But the suburbs were not urban. The new cities of tomorrow will have many of the qualities of both the suburb and the city. From the point of view of cities, the core can be abandoned, but not denied. From the point of view of the suburb, the shopping malls and the highways can be abandoned, but not retail



Our categories are purposefully abstract. Unlike Le Corbusier's which had Man at the center, albeit a modern Man, we will emphasize the larger trans-human forces that now define the science and the image of cities. This is not because we reject designing a city from the point of view of human experience, but that we think that human experience finds itself within, around, and through these trans-human forces.

We re-categorize: Construction, Economy, Circulation, Environment.

The New Radian City does not even have to determine all that is built or even how it is built. The New Radian City does, however, commit itself to the principles of OUR age. The new city is both a scientific project and an imaginary one. It is confirmed in the languages of knowledge and protected in the images of the mind.

If from the first Radian City there was something that can be redeemed, this is also true for the Masterplan; it taught an important lesson, despite itself: the city was just as much image as substance. The energies behind the Masterplan were commerce and tourism, and by the 1980s, this interplay became a key element in the urban imaginary. The two poles of our new city are thus science and image.

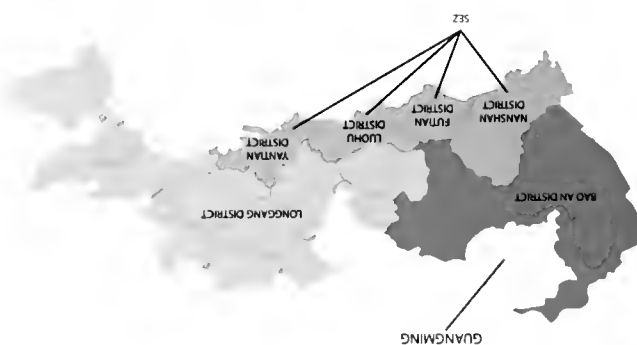
To repeat: CIAM of the 1930s and Masterplan urbanism of the 1970s were determining moments in the history of how we understand the city, transitions into the modern metropolis of tomorrow. The first attempted to cut away lingering attachments to a still agrarian-based notion of the city, a city with a symbolic core, industrial ring and agrarian hinterland. The Masterplan compromised that model by returning to the conventions of a core, surrounded not by industry, but by suburbs.

In other words, the age of the Masterplan has exhausted itself; it was a transition helping cities survive in an age of doubt. Cities today are thriving and more and more people are living in cities. We need to develop a new understanding of the city, one that can, once again, only be brought out once stripped of sentimental associations.

We want to preserve the position that the modern city can be both beautiful and yet a product of unsentimental equation in most Masterplans since the 1970s.

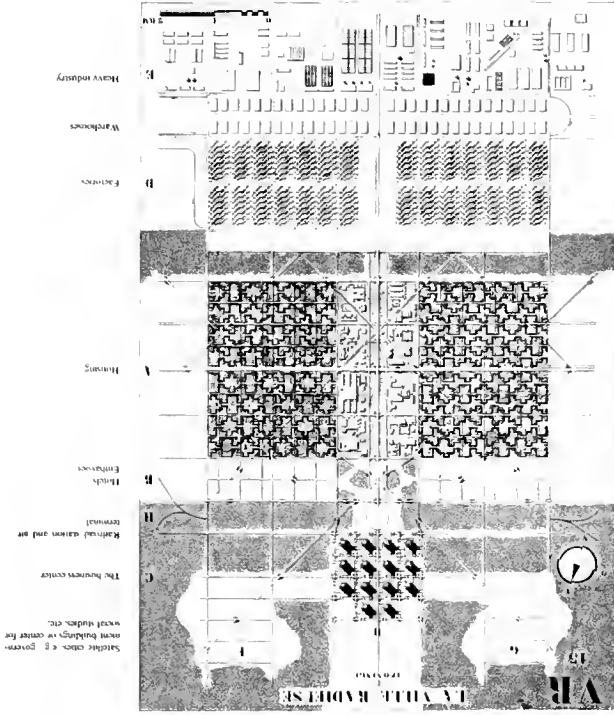
With the Masterplan in mind, and thinking back to Le Corbusier's Radian City, there is one aspect of Le Corbusier's design that we admire: the critique of sentimentality. In our design for the New Radian City we want to challenge the sentimentality that has crept back into the equation in most Masterplans since the 1970s.

is against this equation that we protest. ity, aspiring as they do to simulate organic modernity. It ownership; above all, they did not accept their artificial notion of static square blocks; they preserved the notion more than it could actually deliver. They preserved the



Guangming: New Radiant City

Alexander D'Hooghe
Mark Jarzombek
Yung Ho Chang
Sarah Dunbar
Margaret Hwang



traffic and leisure. At the center was the modern Man.

Though this idea served at the time as an excellent strategy to dismember the nineteenth century city, it did not create a new unity. The failure of Le Corbusier's urbanism - and of CIAM principles in general - lay in the circumstance that it assumed that leisure was separate from work, living separate from industry, and the urban separate from the rural.

In the 1960s, with the failures of cities seeming to be a common problem, cities developed Masterplans as a way to restore confidence in the future and to create a sense of destiny and common purpose. Traditionally, the Masterplan had been the basis upon which the zoning ordinances and the site usage regulations were defined. Now they began to include questions of tourism and local culture. City centers were no longer to be torn down arbitrarily, but were to be preserved as cultural artifacts. In that sense, the ideals of the modernist city came to be fused with the remnants of the traditional city. Holding this together was the image of a city that was not too modern and not too old. THIS became the prototype of the contemporary Masterplan that is still in use today, part rationalism, part neo-sentimentality. But the Masterplan always promised

The name of the new planned city to the north of Shenzhen is 'Guangming.' It means 'Bright-Shining City,' or 'Radiant City' for short. As such, it challenges us to consider the relationship between Guangming and the original Radiant City of Le Corbusier which he designed in 1925, and which served as the basis for much of the thinking about modern urban planning. Though the new Radiant City will be different from Le Corbusier's in many respects, it will be designed with the same sense of optimism about modernity that Le Corbusier had eighty years ago. Very different is the fact that Guangming will not be built in opposition to an old city, as Le Corbusier's new city was, but as an extension - and idealization - of the most modern of cities in the world, Shenzhen.

Le Corbusier's Radiant City of 1925 broke the hold of emotionalism on the city. Curved streets, picturesque layouts, allees and majestic civic structures were X-ed out. Instead the city was seen through the lens of science and pragmatism corresponding to the precepts of the modern age. It was a powerful moment in the history of thinking about urban design. Le Corbusier looked at the city not just as an improvement or clarification of older prototypes, but with new categories all together: living, work,

SK: No.

YHC: So I see this uncontrollable, insatiable desire of self-expression becoming the desire of monuments. All I'm saying is that in the name of democracy some architects want to build monuments for themselves.

SK: Okay, that is vicious. Do you want to respond immediately?

YHC: First of all, I don't agree with Alexander on one definition of fabric. I think, of course, fabric itself is a network in its own right but I think there is a better chance for people to appropriate fabric than monuments.

AD: Speaking of the notion of appropriation, when I am speaking for the monument, it can be modified in numerous ways. This feeling of being alienated is so much more powerful now that identity is being erased and this starts to structure our relations much more than the network itself. My argument for new monumentality is nothing but acknowledging the fact that the network exists but no longer simply celebrating it but addressing counter effects.

SK: Any questions [audience]?

Student: I wonder, is it possible to have a fabric of monuments?

YHC: Long or short answer? (Laughter)

Student: Short!! (Laughter)

YHC: Let's take fabric as a kind of virus. Imagine a landscape of monuments and only fabric can grow around them and out of them. You may think that they are fabrics stacked up anyways and that you can grow into them.

AD: A monumentalized fabric seems like an incredibly attractive thing to deal with, yet I don't really believe in a fabric of monuments. The very notion of fabric itself, with its organic fact that it's not the outgrowth of a natural historical process of stay clear of it, a project that doesn't want to acknowledge that I find dangerous. Any project that is not willing to overcome, I find dangerous. Any project that is not willing to acknowledge a fundamental fact of its existence.

YHC: So I see this uncontrollable, insatiable desire of self-expression becoming the desire of monuments. All I'm saying is that in the name of democracy some architects want to build monuments for themselves.

AD: I want to speak to the first issue. One of the birthplaces of democracy is Athens. I would like to refer to how Ortega and Gasser summarized the Athens agora; it is described as the opposite of fabric. They said that the fundamental act that Athens did is to build a wall and then enclose a space that separates itself from the 'vegetational fields' of outside life, whether nature or small settlements or towns. It is to put a formal space that is strictly public. So the Athens acropolis as a template is nothing but that - a separation from any continuity into a clearly finite influenced space that is then defined by a series of monuments.

There is nothing fabric about it. Wherever you are, you always see two or three but never one [monument] and the structures in between these form the view of the fabric and landscape beyond. So thank you [Yung Ho] for giving me this recognition.

SK: You do begin to find an important new ground in rejecting the colossal or sublime monument in favor of a landscape of quasi-monuments. You bring up an interesting idea of salience, the distinguishing ability of monuments from things around it. I would like to ask Yung Ho if lack of salience is in fact a problem with fabric dominated spaces.

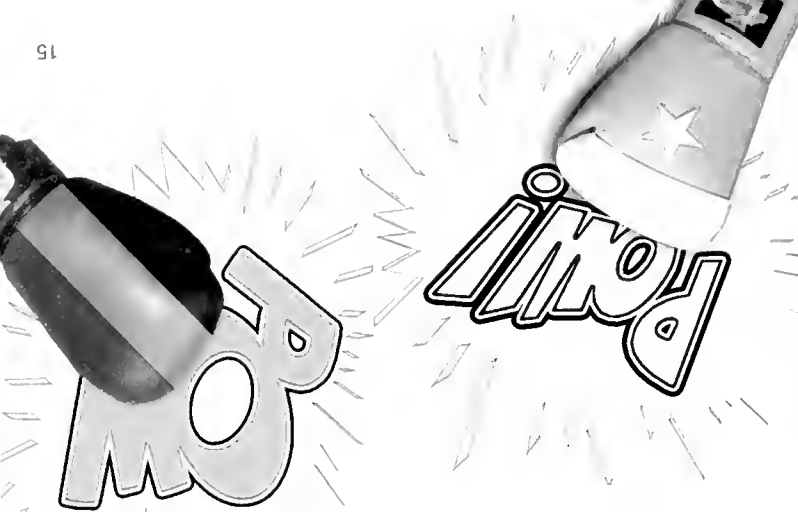
YHC: Maybe we can stay in Europe a little longer in some cities we are very familiar with. Let's take Sienna, for example. It is a fabric city with one object - the tower that is the city hall. What does the tower do? It is where you leave the city to go and look back onto the fabric. All the monument does is to provide a vantage point; daily life would unfold with or without that. It is not essential. So I do not see the necessity of a monument.

AD: Let me ask you a question - doesn't that vantage point, the fact of being able to stand outside the fabric, look at it and thus become conscious of it, seems to be a major justification for the tower in Sienna?

SK: The real monument of Sienna is the extraordinary concave plateau that provides a kind of basin for all these activities. Certainly you [Alexander] don't exclude the possibility of the horizontal monument and certainly you [Yung Ho] wouldn't exclude the particular moment in the surface of Sienna as being part of the fabric?

YHC: No but the horizontal monument may be even more problematic. The Ringstrasse in Vienna is more tyrannical than the city wall was because it put a choke onto the city. I really think it's very important to understand what fabric offers - interiorly so it contains life not so it brings someone out of it.

SK: Let's say we placed the word 'network' in everything that is associated with fabric, in a way to describe the transforma-



larger than what can be contained in the emotions, which is why what we see as classically monumental spaces were always put at the service of demagoguery. Let's hear about the soft sort of liberal despotism that you [Alexander] see. It is clear that European thinking is struggling with inventing new types of democracy. Young He's probably right about this, the monument operates through symbolism and the propagation of meaning, often associated with despotic control versus what you talk about as the tyranny of the masses that sounded so much like democracy.

AD: It's good you said that, you raise many issues; one is the sublime the other despotism. The debate we're having today is not a new one; it has gone on for at least 120 years. This debate appears in Vienna in late 19th century. Two positions arise when a new speed arose in the city [with the introduction of the tram], this new urban reality led to the logic of Cite and Wagner. Cite felt it was completely wrong and that we have to go back to something 'authentic' for German people, based on an analysis of various medieval [German] towns. He came up with absolute rules for fabric based architecture at the human scale, which we today associate with fabric, all in order to justify a turn away from modernity, progress, towards a very German identity based, nationalistic, extremely scary discourse not only based on blood but a type of city. That is where the fabric finds its first defender.

SK: Village, blood and earth.

AD: Yes, that is one position. When we use the word fabric it is not innocent. The other position is from Wagner. He embraced this modernity, speed and new scale. He felt that emancipation for Vienna loomed on the horizon and people would finally be released from an oppressive fabric where history continued to determine generation after generation who you are and who you grow into. That is the reason I want to embrace the monument because of its relation to modernity, as a project of emancipation from historical tradition. This is probably very European. For us history is something oppressive, so you are forced to rid yourself of it.

SK: Wagner's troubling approach to the sublime vs. Schoenbergian fabric.

AD: Richard Wagner in music is old fashioned, the kind of monument I'm trying to make a case for is one that comes after [Wagner], where synthesis has been shattered and merely regrouped into a series of legible contradictions.

YHC: I think Alexander can use some psychoanalysis. Why would he choose not to remember the fact that fabric was the first place of democracy and, of course, that that fabric was that you have been going through these very depressing periods of history but then what about all the narcissistic architects who do not have the channels to express themselves and are suddenly rediscovering monuments? Should I stop there?

does not want to go beyond those. It installs a complete openness, whereas the notion of fabric inherently wants to continue.

The kind of monument I would like to argue for is not the one the Chairman proposed in Beijing in the 50's, but, from a European background, where my concern with the monument is coming from, what I resent is the right wing's ability to hijack monumentality for its discourse, the totalitarian hijacking of the monument (the soviet monument), for example. The question I'd like to ask is, is it not possible, coming from Antwerp, to use the monumental to propagate a different ideal? Pluralism or pluralist liberalism? Can we build an equally strong symbolic form as a counter project? That is the basis for my interest in monumentality. [Shows images from competitions and projects he is engaged in] Monumentality is not about size but about difference with the background. This is a competition for a small town of 10,000 between the Netherlands and Belgium. The competition involves the redesign of the civic center. You see in the distance a 13th century church. We decided to install a series of secondary monuments, each with completely different value systems vis-a-vis the other. This creates a series of in between spaces scaled to be usable as public spaces. The series of monuments structure the perception of the existing condition, making no compromise to the fabric. Another project is in Brussels. This capital was never systematically structured according to a single imperial premise, which is not the case in terms of Paris, London, or Berlin. It is a series of debris- colonization efforts from other European countries. [Shows image of islands and glue] There is no consistent continuing fabric left in this city, there are only a series of ensembles. I like that the city leaves the different pieces intact. I rest my case.

SK: Counter attack.

YHC: I think the problem with Alexander's argument is that he actually didn't talk about what these monuments stand for, in a symbolic way. Monuments have been the best in the past when they were built as tombs, for dead people. Otherwise they are built for some kind of power. So I don't really see any way for a monument not to be tyrannical. Today if [the monument] could be a mega-shopping mall, which is then a monument of capitalism, I think Alexander's idea of borrowing monumentality to serve the purpose of liberal democracy is a veritable fantasy.

SK: Your right to rebuttal.

AD: Talking about fantasy (Laughter), there is something about speaking truth to power. One way in which architecture and urban design can establish legitimacy about the world in which we live is to show it for what it is. I believe that any attempt to transform these inherently super-modern oppressive programs into a fabric will always be nothing but a veil that tries to transform a program into something that it is not. That is one rebuttal.

SK: It is very clear that politics is what any discussion you guys have will narrow itself down to. What one thinks about when Alexander speaks about monuments is the sublime, something

Photo: Nereaj Bhatia

ROOM
AVT 7-431

MODERATOR
SANFORD KWINTER

TIME
12:30-2:00

FABRIC **VS.** **MONUMENT**

MIT DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE

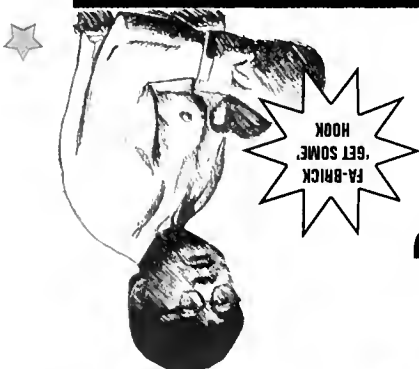
BROUGHT TO YOU BY



"THE MONUMENT" **D'HOOGHE**

ALEXANDER

VS.



"THE FABRIC" **CHANG**

YUNG HO

10 - ROUND EXTRA VAGANZA

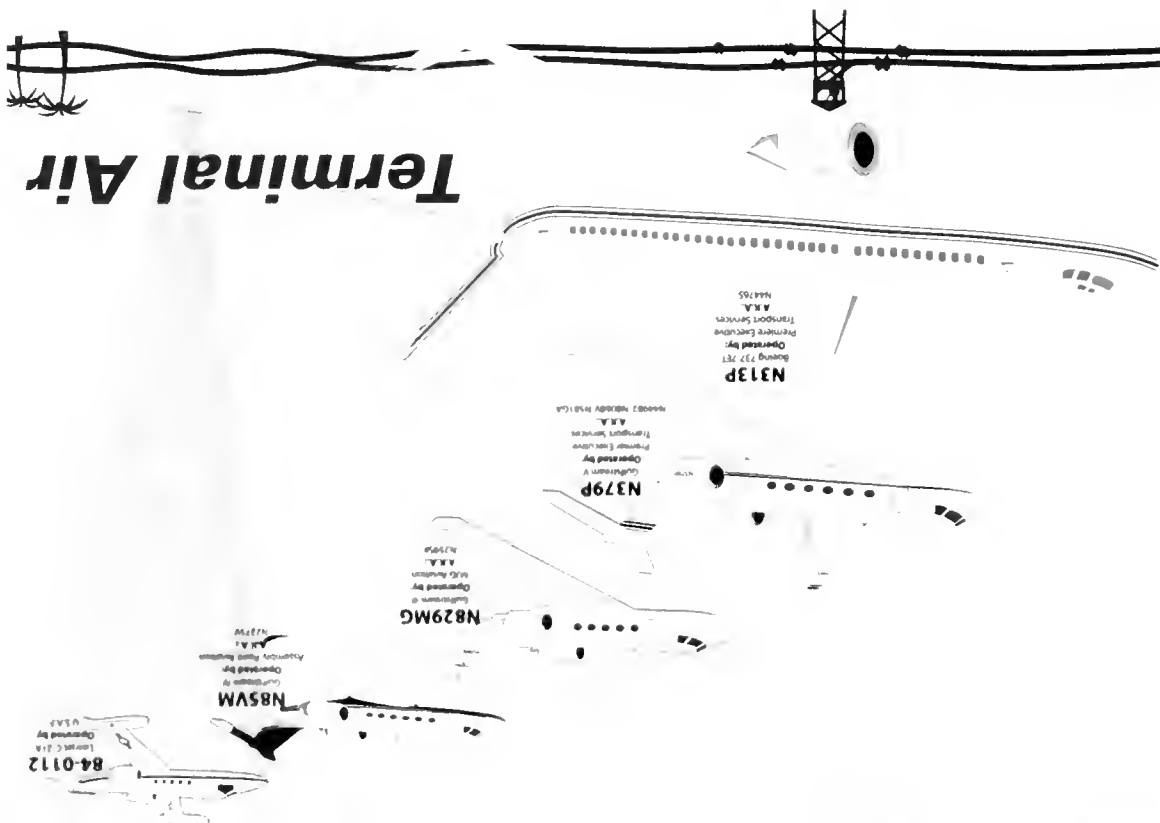
ONE NIGHT ONLY

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 8, 2006



FIGHT CLUB





Notes:

John Creadson and Tom Hundley, "Jet's Travels Cloaked in Mystery,"

² "Furor Belgees 'Bendition' Claret," BBC News, 11 Feb 2002.

³ "Italy Indicts 31 Linked to CIA Rendition Case," *International Herald Tribune*.

15 Feb 2007

Gordon Lacey, CH, OBE, JCR, MBE, was born 21 March 1905, Boston Globe 21 Mar 2005.

⁵ John Creadson and Tom Hundley, "Jet's Travels Cloaked in Mystery,"

Chicago Tribune, 20 Mar 2005

Stockman, a Tetol suspect, told rights have made him Boston Globe.

Flights", *New York Times*, 31 May 2005.

Whitlock, C. "A Secret Deportation Of Terror Suspects", *Washington Post*.

23 JULY 2004

English transcript available from Human Rights Watch at

<http://www.sveinbjorn.org/english/docs/2004/05/17/sweden62.htm>

GREY, S. (2006). *Ghost Faint: The True Story of the CIA Female Program*. St. Martin's Press.

¹⁰ Grey, S. "Details of US 'Torture by Proxy Flights' Emerge".

The Times (UK), 14 Nov 2004

Fortune All, San Francisco Bay Country, 1910-11, B-11, 30 1905

$$7) \quad P^{\alpha} = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{2} \right) = \frac{1}{4} \quad \text{and} \quad P^{\beta} = \frac{1}{2} \quad (10)$$

two planes, both with permits to land at U.S. military bases'. Their Gulfstream V with the tail number N379P (changed to N8068V in 2003) was involved in the rendition of Ahmed Agiza and Muhammad al-Zery from Sweden to Egypt¹¹, and the rendition of microbiology student Jamil Qasim Saeed Mohammed from Pakistan to Jordan¹². In 2004, the plane's tail number was changed to N44982 and sold to Bayard Foreign Market-ing, another apparent CIA front company. In 2006, its tail number was again changed to N126CH. It is currently owned by the imaginatively named N126CH, Inc. Premier Executive Transport Services also owned a Boeing 737 with the tail number N313P which made frequent trips to US military bases¹⁰. This plane now goes by the tail number N44765 and is owned by Keeler & Tate Management of Reno, Nevada. Tyler Edward Tate, the owner of Keeler and Tate, seems to be a fictitious person and signatures bearing his name on official documents appear to have been written by several different people.¹¹

different people.¹¹

Weekly Flights!
N85VM



GUANTÁNAMO BAY
EXPRESS

The PC42

PETS is an airline listed as Foreign Corporation in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts widely believed to be a front company for the Central Intelligence Agency. The company does not have any offices or premises, and searches of public records for identifying information about the company's officers have yielded only post office boxes in Virginia, Maryland and Washington DC. Premier Executive Transport Services has owned

PREMIER EXECUTIVE TRANSPORT SERVICES

on charges of kidnapping Nasr. At the time, N85VM was owned by Assembly Point Aviation which in turn was owned by Phillip H. Morse, part-owner of the Boston Red Sox⁴ whose logo occasionally appeared on the plane's tail⁵. Its registration number has been changed to N227SV. The plane is currently owned by Richmond Aviation and is available for charter from Schemmately.

This Gulfstream IV jet is widely believed to have been used to render Osama Moustata Hassan Nasr (aka Abu Omar) from Italy to Cairo on February 17, 2003.⁶ Nasr claims that while held in detention, he was subjected to electric shocks, beatings, and rape threats. He was released in September 2007, by an Egyptian court that ruled his detention was "unfounded."⁷ 26 Americans and 5 Italians are currently under indictment in Italy

N85VM

Kabul, Afghanistan. N313P, also operated by Premier Executive Transport Services, was used to transport Khaled el-Masri from Macedonia to the infamous 'Salt Pit' prison near Ibrahīm El-Zari from Sweden to Egypt. Ibrahīm El-Zari from Sweden to Egypt. Pakistan to Jordan and later to transport Ahmed Hussein Mustata Kamī Agiza and Muhammad Sulaiman

Terminal Air

KEY
☐ N379P
☐ N313P
☐ N85VM
☐ N839MG
☐ 84-0112
☐ Unknown

Simply Extraordinary!

Terminal Air

Tad Hirsch, the Institute for Applied Autonomy

through whose jurisdiction these networks operate, are aware of, or indeed complicit in such activities.

ROUTE MAP

This map offers a glimpse into shadowy networks of government agencies and private contractors that operate in our name and on our behalf, outside the realm of international law and free of public scrutiny in the United States. These are routes taken by aircraft during actual renditions, documented through a combination of public testimony, chance circumstance, and the hard work of journalists, researchers and plane spotters.

THE FLEET

The "fleet" presented here represents a sampling of planes that have been tied to the renditions of specific persons to dark prisons around the world. The use of these planes for extraordinary renditions has been corroborated by testimony from released prisoners and through the examination of flight logs.

84-0112 was used to fly kidnapped cleric Abu Omar from Milan, Italy to the Ramstein Airbase in Germany. From there Abu Omar was transported to a prison in Egypt onboard N85VM, also used to fly the Red Sox professional baseball team to spring training.

N829MG brought Canadian national Maher Arar from the US to Jordan, where he was transferred over-land to Syria and tortured for 13 months before being released without charge.

N379P, known as the "Guantanamo Bay Express" operated by Premiere Executive Transport Services was used to render Jamil Qasim Saeed Mohammed from

Extraordinary rendition is the current practice of the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), in which suspected terrorists detained in Western countries are transported to so-called "black sites" for interrogation and torture. Terminal Air examines the mechanics of extraordinary rendition through an installation that imagines the CIA office, through which the program is administered, as a travel agency of sorts, which coordinates complex networks of private contractors, leased equipment, and shell companies.

The following posters were produced as part of the installation They identify the private contractors supplying the equipment and personnel, and adorn the travel agency's walls. In addition to these posters, wall-mounted displays track the movements of aircraft involved in extraordinary rendition, while promotional posters identify the private contractors supplying equipment and personnel. Booking agents' desks feature computers offering interactive animations that enable visitors to monitor air traffic and airport data from around the world, while office telephones provide real-time updates as new flight plans are registered with international aviation authorities. Seemingly-discarded receipts, notes attached to computer monitors, and other ephemera provide additional detail including names of detainees and suspected CIA agents, dates of known renditions, and images of rendition aircraft.

The full contours of the extraordinary rendition program have yet to be described. It is assumed that additional renditions have taken place, while details are unknown. One of the most contentious unanswered questions is the extent to which local authorities,

the poor things they are the 14th spoken language in the world and they think they are the first. They know they are the first, they believe they are the first, but once in a while someone reminds them they are the 14th, because there is Chinese, Spanish, Arabic.

It takes a lot of work to change what you've been taught, as a child I had been culturally abused. If I could, I would sue these people: my uncle, my environment, books. Some people are sexually abused and they get money as compensation, I think some people are culturally abused and should get money, too. We need to come up with an Art Abuse Table, concerning the French, an International Tribunal should form to handle this. "Africa is underdeveloped," "Paris is beautiful," such phrases fall under abuse. If parents tell their children that Paris is at the center of art- that is abuse. It is killing all horizons for the child. And to tell a child French wine is the best, that is also child wine abuse, but after 17 years of age, it's consensual and cannot be prosecuted. I think, in child art abuse cases, the child should be compensated from 1,000 to 10,000 dollars.

"American in Paris," this pornographic film should be stopped. "Gigi" should be X rated- adult viewing only. When I became conscious of this it was too late. I couldn't sue anyone; a court will tell me "You were consensual." I'm too kind to sue the abusers, though. Parents should be careful what artistic judgment they give to their children. SS: I see you working for Hassan Fathy as a way of reversing the artistic judgment given to you. When and why did you start working for him?

CA: I started working in 1981, because there was an architect called Abdallah Khouatly, who was hired by the Aga Khan to file his drawings for two years. I knew him so I worked for two years as a paid assistant. When this project finished Hassan Fathy asked me to do his papers, manuscripts, and notes. During these two years I came to know the man, the architect, and I thought it was quite a secure, protective environment, that house, so I continued with Hassan Fathy for 8 more years, just to be next to this man. It was a process of learning being there. I knew that I had to clean what I had learned for thirty years, because while I was with him I did textiles, I did traditional clothes, and I did photography. I wasn't paid when I worked for

him, so I had to bring in money. I had to invent a form of visuals, so I did textile. When you see an Arab house in museums, it's not the real thing, in actuality it is full of color but in textile form. There is a culture of moving textile, the color moves, it's not stationary like a wall on a painting, things move. Fathy gave me independence outside the gallery system. I never gave an exhibit of my stencils in a gallery in Cairo, thanks to Hassan Fathy. You can still be a painter without showing in a gallery, by selling work through word of mouth. My art master, though, was the adobe brick. Putting three bricks together to make a wall, to make a pattern, it's magic. You put two together and in the middle one more and you stack them together to build a wall. Or you tell one brick vertically, at an angle, or overlap one brick with another. It all starts there and you end up with a girl holding a Kalashnikov. I was very impressed by architecture for years and Fathy was the best architect for me because he was building space. The limitation of space is magic. What influenced me was his research and his systematic insistence that every line you do has to come from the given geography of the land. He connected architecture to history- it was in this way that I followed him. It was a huge challenge for me to produce a print on a wall that was repetitive. It was not about uniqueness; I was obsessed by the fact that anyone could do it. I could do geometric work with only a straight line because I didn't have artisans- it was the closest to brick, think, should I do a nude oil or brick? I chose brick, so they don't say that the French brought croissants and this Armenian is bringing roses. I was very sensitive about my name in Egypt when I returned from France, so I had to do something that would make me Egyptian, which today I don't need anymore. The best way to become Egyptian is to become French I had to change my work; I love my work too much to do that. The brick was my life. I was dying to do something to compete with the brick. The canary can never be the eagle... maybe I became a parrot. You know, I'll go to prison if you publish everything here. Just publish the funniest things. SS: Yes, of course, only the funniest bits. CA: If it's funny, you can keep anything.



scrolls. Like people here when they have a wedding, they have this textile, which is printed now, but used to be textile, you put it up and then you take it off. This moving of the object is very important, like Chinese scrolls, or movable screens. The Arab Bedouin culture, it's magic because the whole thing ends up in a box. Your house can become a box. This is top architecture. So this concept of movement, it's very important to show, because we are dying in our tombs, which are these unmovable houses we live in. We can't move the walls, but imagine you're in a house and you can move the walls, it's beyond... So, where are the real questions?

CA: Aaah, but it's all about the stencils, but that's okay.

CA: The problem with the French, maybe to put it there, is that they are a minority. They have the same problem as the minorities. They are a relatively big country, but

CA: Yes, that could help but the images are all from photos---except mangos. I drew a mango. I had to draw a mango because I didn't have a mango. [Laughter] Yeah, I'm not joking, it's true--so I imagined a mango. I could've gotten it from the internet at the time, but I didn't have it, so I drew a mango, but all the other portraits and things are from photos and as the photos are:

CA: It was not supposed to be like that. It ended up like a painting but what saved the situation is the scrolls that were supposed to remind you of the textile. The scrolls were done initially for a birthday party; you put it on the walls and afterwards take it off. You don't live with the



the stencils, but I didn't know what was going to happen, that it was going to go on for so long. I did two or three stencils at the beginning and that was it. And then it went on and on and on and it became like drugs; you can't stop. Then I stopped, I said enough is enough.

SS: The imagery of many of your stencils is taken from Egypt in the 1950's, during Nasser's era. How did you pick the subject matter for your work?

CA: In the beginning it was my childhood memories, and then little by little I was shocked by what I discovered in newspapers, I mean the mise en scene that was there. Mise en scene means how a photo is directed; how an image is not true. Neither the people stand like that nor look like that; everything was fake. The images said things about liberty and happiness and sports, but the photos were composed, for propaganda, so it was very amazing to do this work- like "The Arab Girl with a Gun."

And then there were portraits of people that were important. I did a portrait of Umm Kulthum because I thought she was a freedom fighter for bringing money for the army in 1964. I also did one of Afghani, who was expelled from Cairo by the British and died in Istanbul. The choices are half-conscious, half-subconscious. Sometimes you pick a drawing because it's obviously aggressive- it was meant to lie- so you do it. I did it to emphasize the lie. Just so you understand the lie, by doing a stencil of it, or a photo of it, or exhibiting it, whatever. But the stencil, it's a facade, a fake facade, because it looks like a painting and it talks about something quite horrible, something quite dramatic. A few of the stencils are like that, a few are

dramatic, but it doesn't show because it has color and it

looks like a painting.

SS: You like that fact that your work is a stencil pretending to be a painting.

CA: Yes, yes, yes, of course it looks like a painting, but if you do it on a textile, if you do the stencil on the wall, on the street, it's a different context, it becomes a different context. If you put it together on a bigger panel, it's a different context. If you put it separately, unassembled on the wall, it's a different context, if you put the photo with it... What you saw in the book is all stencils, there is not one line, which is not a stencil- the letters, everything is stencils. That is why I'm doing my next exhibition to show that nothing is hand drawn, because I was amazed in Beirut people asked me how I do them. I thought it was very obvious how it's done, but apparently not, because people thought I drew them, by hand.

SS: I think especially in the larger pieces it seems more obvious it's a stencil than in the small ones. For example, when you showed me the portrait of Afghani, you told me that because of the paper size you had needed two transparencies to make that one stenciled image. Do you think someone looking at that image of Afghani can see that you used two stencil pieces?

CA: No, maybe not. But this was done because the photo was like that.

SS: You wanted to stay true to the image...

goes up, in pretentious society, it goes up, but it doesn't work everywhere, because the majority of people I now know, they know that France is the passé. Anyways we've said enough about Paris, but I wish them well and I wish the Armenians in France well and the Egyptians in France well, I wish everybody well, and let them enjoy liberté, égalité, fraternité.

SS: The other day at your flat, you were telling me the story about how you came to do your first stencil...

CA: But I never did a stencil. A lady wanted an image of a singer and I did it in stencil, because I didn't want to do one drawing, I wanted to have a file, like an architect, and from that file I could make a copy. I thought doing something once was not good. I wanted to have something, a drawing that was like a photocopy, where I would have given the photocopy, not the original, and kept the original with a number. I love the idea of not doing something once.

A big part of the stencils was also inventing an identity. I didn't want to change my country to fit my name or change my name to fit my country. It took five years in Armenia for me to feel comfortable keeping my name and my country. I went in 2000. Anyways, I thought doing a painting by hand was overrated. You can't do a painting by hand, you can't draw anymore. I don't.

SS: Why?

CA: Because when you see craftsmen, when you see how people copy, and how people have patterns in printing or for textiles or the forms in calligraphy, you see that people use something as a base pattern, and from that, they copy. I made a rapprochement with silkscreen because of this idea, because I discovered that people have filed forms that they use. I went to Aleppo, have you been to Aleppo? There are these magnificent textile printers, with huge ateliers and this guy is printing with one repeated circle and he does four meters of printing and they hang it on huge bars, in this huge place - it's beyond. I went mad. It's magic. Because the guy is there doing the most beautiful textile and he's not an artist, he doesn't say "I'm an artist," he's not in the Modern Art Museum.

In between Paris and Cairo I stopped doing any hand-work, any painting. And I never wanted to do painting, but I discovered that people put photos of people on the wall- football players, movie stars- and I thought to do

as the center of culture: in the house, in school, in my surroundings, in the French cultural institute in Cairo, in Egyptian cinema. I mean if you see Egyptian movies, everyone goes to Europe- the doctor is coming from Europe; they go to Europe to bring the machines. I mean the guy thinks his wife is having an affair with another man, he takes the child and he goes to Europe. This is in a famous Egyptian film. The wife goes to the villa of her husband and his mother says, the guy is not here and your son is not here and tomorrow they are going to Europe- this is a very big event- the guy goes to Europe. He doesn't go to Sudan, he doesn't go to Afghanistan, he goes to Europe. So we grew up thinking Europe is the center. You walk in the street and the birds sing that, 'Europe, Europe, Europe'. Where you were born and raised, was it like that, 'Europe, Europe, Europe'?

SS: No, not really.

CA: Yes, in Paris I saw it on my skin, the police would stop me and check my ID, this was twenty five years ago, and tell me, 'You're lucky you're in France because in your country you can't survive.' And once in school I said something critical and my colleagues, told me, 'Then go back to your country.' All this adds up, all this made it clear that Paris is too good for me; I am not good enough for Paris, so I left. Paris is beautiful, this is passé, it's out of fashion now. They live in two periods, the French, in the Revolution and '68. There are beautiful streets in Bukhara I wouldn't exchange for the whole of Paris because it has history and contemporaneity and the people are today and you are in 2007, and there is still something magical there. The French think they have taste, well I also have taste, we all have taste, and my taste says that Paris is old, it's old-fashioned, it's not hip. Bukhara is hip.

You don't go to a movie with someone if he says I like Paris, once a person says I love Paris, finished, it's out, you cannot trust him, because that is bad taste. And people have bad taste, in general, sorry. If they say 'I like Kabuli', then you say, aah, there is something there... I studied in Paris just to be accepted by society.

SS: Did it work?

CA: It still works. Whenever you are in good society, in the sense of thieves, crooks, liars- I don't know how else to put it- and you speak a little bit of French, your level



fashion, the most beautiful museums, the most beautiful city in the world, which is Paris, which is incredible, I mean it is beyond. And then they have these fantastic values of liberty, fraternity, and equality, which you cannot even discuss. I mean you go to jail if we discuss this; these are universal values. So Paris is universal. You just say the word Paris and you can sell it on a postcard; you can make a lot of money.

So the reason, yes, that I left, I thought I don't deserve Paris, so I left. I met people who told me, 'Change your name, you have now to behave like this, there are rules in France,' and I saw people living there who said they are Armenian, and I was very young and I was very shocked. I couldn't cope with the idea of becoming an Armenian living

in France; I can't cope with this idea, until today I am born in Egypt and there is a reason- this might be very naive- but there is a reason my destiny made it that I'm born in this country. Of course, if they kill me or if they put me out, I'll go out, but there must be a reason, so I wanted to come back to discover this reason. I even wonder today how come other people are born outside Paris. How come we are not all born in Paris? This is very important. I mean, it's very strange that there are other places in the world than Paris.

SS When you went to study in Paris did you also feel you were going to the center of the art world?

Yes, because I grew up until the age of 18 with Paris

Europe, Europe, Europe

Chant Avedissian with Sadia Shirazi

It is lunchtime and I am meeting Chant Avedissian again, after an awkward initial encounter. We first met in the childhood apartment he now shares with his sister- amid cigarette butts and vertically-hung scrolls- in downtown Cairo. After making coffee, we began a conversation in which all my attempts to talk about Avedissian's artwork were sidelined. We spoke, instead, about my work, interests and intentions; I was then shown around Avedissian's room and studio, a 3x4m room with a built-in loft. It was a tight, spare, woodlined space with standing room on the bottom floor near a computer and dais. Narrow steps led to the top floor where you could sit, stoop, or lie down but not stand. This is where Avedissian sleeps, works and stores his files, with a twin bed on one end, books piled beside it and within crawling distance a meter away, a work space under the room's only "window", which - at 15cm² and with a fan fitted snugly into it - is more of a ventilation aperture. The attic-like space makes it easy to understand the scale of Avedissian's portrait works and the economy of his scrolls. It has been two days and we are meeting again for a formal interview at the restaurant Filfilah, a popular downtown establishment.

Sadia Shirazi: How did you find living and studying in Canada in the 70's? Weren't there many people migrating there from Egypt at the time?

Chant Avedissian: I went to art school there, it was post-Woodstock in the 70's and I didn't even know what Woodstock was. [Laughter] This is like going somewhere after a nuclear war and you don't know what happened in the war. I couldn't cope with post-Woodstock. The concept

of immigration to Canada I don't like but I discovered this there. Everyone was immigrating, my family was immigrating, my uncles were there, then my mother died, so I immigrated alone. All the communities live in restaurants there; I cannot connect my identity to a restaurant. I can't live in a cafeteria. We go to an Egyptian restaurant, we go to a Chinese restaurant, we go to a Greek restaurant: a restaurant is not a country. In New York people love other countries as long as it's in a restaurant. It's too early to go into this, but this is what happened in Canada. People had identity as long as it remained in a restaurant; this bourgeoisie who went to Canada in the 70's just to ameliorate their financial situation, this part of Canada I couldn't stand, not the other side. Not other things.

SS: After leaving Canada you moved back to Cairo then left again to study in Paris. What made you decide to return to Cairo after Paris?

CA: I came back to Cairo because to stay in Paris I had to become French. Because you can't survive France if you're not French. And I thought I can't be Egyptian-Armenian-French. It was too much. I was lost, between Egypt and Armenia- my name is Armenian but I am from Egypt- and then I was going to become French. That was just too much.

SS: Do you mean becoming French by taking citizenship? CA: Taking the identity, the blood cells. It's about blood cells, about assimilation; they call it integration. We are all supposed to have this beautiful culture of France because they are the most sophisticated, have the most beautiful

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